



Small Stones Festival of the Arts performance by

## Stephen Drury

Sunday, October 25, 2020, 7:00 P.M.

Streamed to you from the Apple Tree Arts Great Hall  
at One Grafton Common, Grafton, MA



### PROGRAM

**Anthony R. Green: Apology** (2020) (premiere performance)

**Frederic Rzewski: The People United Will Never Be Defeated!** - 36  
variations on "¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!" (1975)



### PERFORMER & COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES

Pianist and conductor **STEPHEN DRURY** has performed throughout the world with a repertoire that stretches from Bach to Liszt to the music of today. He has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Barbican Centre and Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, the Cité de la Musique in Paris, and the Leipzig Gewandhaus, and from Arkansas to Seoul. A champion of contemporary music, he has taken the sound of dissonance into remote corners of Pakistan, Greenland and Montana.

Stephen Drury's performances of music written in the last hundred years, ranging from the piano sonatas of Charles Ives to works by György Ligeti, Frederic Rzewski and John Cage have received the highest critical acclaim. Drury has worked closely with many of the leading composers of our time, including Cage, Ligeti, Rzewski, Steve Reich, Olivier Messiaen, John Zorn, Luciano Berio, Helmut Lachenmann, Christian Wolff, Jonathan Harvey, Michael Finnissy, Lee Hyla and John Luther Adams.

Drury has commissioned new works for solo piano from John Cage, John Zorn, John Luther Adams, Terry Riley, and Chinary Ung with funding provided by Meet The Composer. He has performed with Zorn in Paris, Vienna, London, Brussels, and New York, and conducted Zorn's music in Bologna,

Boston, Chicago, and in the UK and Costa Rica. In March of 1995 he gave the first performance of Zorn's concerto for piano and orchestra *Aporias* with Dennis Russell Davies and the Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra. Later that same season he gave the premiere of *Basic Training* for solo piano, written for him by Lee Hyla. Drury has recorded the music of John Cage, Elliott Carter, Charles Ives, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Colin McPhee, John Zorn, John Luther Adams and Frederic Rzewski, as well as works of Liszt and Beethoven, for Mode, New Albion, Catalyst, Tzadik, Avant, MusicMasters, Cold Blue, New World and Neuma.

Drury is artistic director and conductor of the Callithumpian Consort, and he created and directs the Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice at New England Conservatory. Drury earned his undergraduate degree for Harvard College, and has also earned the New England Conservatory's select Artist Diploma. His teachers have included Claudio Arrau, Patricia Zander, William Masselos, Margaret Ott, and Theodore Lettvin, and conducting with Donald Thulean. He teaches at New England Conservatory, where he has directed festivals of the music of John Cage, Steve Reich, and Christian Wolff.

The creative output of **ANTHONY R. GREEN** (composer, performer, social justice artist) includes musical and visual creations, interpretations of original works or works in the repertoire, collaborations, educational outreach, and more. Behind all of his artistic endeavors are the ideals of equality and freedom, which manifest themselves in diverse ways in a composition, a performance, a collaboration, or social justice work.

As a composer, his works have been presented in over 20 countries by Gabriela Díaz (violin), Wendy Richman (viola), Ashleigh Gordon (viola), Gregory Williams (viola), Hayk Melikyan (piano), Eunmi Ko (piano), Amanda DeBoer Bartlett (soprano), ALEA III (conducted by Gunther Schuller), The Playground Ensemble, Transient Canvas, Ossia New Music Ensemble, Access Contemporary Music, counter)induction, BLY, NOISE-BRIDGE, Tenth Intervention, Chartreuse, and Alarm Will Sound, to name a few. He has received commissions from Community Music Works, Make Music Boston, Celebrity Series Boston, the Robert McCormick Percussion Group, and various soloists and ensembles. He has been a resident artist at the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts (Nebraska), Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Escape to Create (Florida), Visby International Centre for Composers (Sweden), Space/Time (Scotland), atelier:performance (Germany), and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts (Nebraska). As a performer, he has appeared at venues in the US, Cyprus, France, the Netherlands, the UK, Israel, Germany, Switzerland, Turkey, and South Korea, working with student and emerging composers, as well as established composers such as David Liptak, Renée C. Baker, Steve Reich, and George Crumb.

Through music and entrepreneurship, Green comments on many issues related to social justice, including immigration (*Earned* - narrator & double string quartet), civil rights (*Dona Nobis Veritatem* - soprano, viola, & piano), the historical links between slavery and current racial injustice in the US (*Oh,*

*Freedom!* - spoken word, voice, flute, viola, cello; *Almost Over* - sax quartet), the contributions of targeted and/or minority groups to humanity (*A Single Voice: Solitary, Unified* - solo alto sax & fixed media), and more. His ongoing opera-project *Alex in Transition* highlights the life of Alex - a trans woman - and her journey to truth and authentic living. This opera has been featured in the Ft. Worth Opera Frontiers Festival, presented by New Fangled Opera and One Ounce Opera, and performed in a concert production at the Israel Conservatory of Music in Tel Aviv. *Green's* most important social justice work has been with *Castle of our Skins*, a concert and education series organization dedicated to celebrating Black artistry through music. Co-founder, associate artistic director, and composer-in-residence, his work with *Castle of our Skins* has included concert/workshop curation and development, community outreach, lecturing about the history and politics concerning Black composers of Classical music, and more.

His main composition teachers have been Theodore Antoniou, Lee Hyla, and Robert Cogan, and he has participated in masterclasses with Laura Schwendinger, Paquito D'Rivera, and the JACK Quartet. His solo and collaborative work has been recognized by grants from Meet the Composer, the Argosy Foundation, New Music USA, and the American Composers Forum as a McKnight Visiting Composer. He is currently a fellow at the Berlin University of the Arts.

**FREDERIC RZEWSKI**, composer and pianist, became known as an interpreter of new piano music by Boulez, Stockhausen, Bussotti, Kagel, Cage, Feldman, and Wolff, performed world premieres, and recorded much of the music of these composers for the first time. In the summer of 1963, he and Charlotte Moorman organized the first New York Avant-Garde Festival at Judson Hall. He then returned to Europe, where he spent two years in West Berlin on the invitation of Elliott Carter in the Ford Foundation's artists-in-residence program (1963 - 1965). The electronic tape-composition *Zoologischer Garten* dates from this time. With Alvin Curran and Richard Teitelbaum, he founded the M.E.V. (*Musica Elettronica Viva*) group, devoted to live electronic music and improvisation.

In 1968 he began, with "*Les Moutons de Panurge*", a series of compositions based on additive melodic formulas which began to address social theses, and he became more and more concerned with the question of language, striving to express the most difficult and complex formal structures in a form which could be understood by a wide variety of listeners. He was also concerned with what appeared to be a crisis in theory, not only in music but in many different fields, including science and politics: the absence of a general theory to explain phenomena and guide behavior. He explored forms in which existing musical languages could be brought together. A series of variations for solo piano, "*The People United Will Never Be Defeated!*", was the main expression for these ideas at the time.

In 1977 Henri Pousseur invited Rzewski to teach at the Conservatory of Liege, and he began experimenting with graphic notation and using unconventional instruments or combinations of instruments. In 1982 he became interested in new ways of exploring twelve-tone rows. With "*Antigone-Legend*", a one-hour setting of Brecht's poem for voice and piano, he devised a technique using all-interval rows which he has employed in a number of compositions since then. In the last few years, in

addition to purely instrumental music, Rzewski has written a number of pieces using texts, both large and small. He has also done a considerable amount of teaching, both at the Liege Conservatory and at Yale, the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, SUNY Buffalo, and the Hochschule der Kuenste in West Berlin.



## PROGRAM NOTES

### **APOLOGY**

#### Preface

During my residency at the Gettysburg National Military Park in 2019, I experienced one of the most life-affirming, emotionally painful yet beautiful moments I have ever endured as a Black man. It occurred at a church, scarcely populated, seemingly on the brink of closing, despite its historical importance. Towards the end of the service, a white man confessed to being a racist in his childhood, growing up and realizing his moral depravity, and seeking forgiveness. He asked myself and the other Black parishioners for forgiveness and acceptance. We all wept and hugged him. Apology is a musical reflection upon that moment, both technical and psychological. It is a sonic diary entry, not meant to capture details, but more to encapsulate the most important little and big aspects of that experience. Apology was composed with love for Stephen Drury.

*... from my residency journal, 18 February 2019*

#### Day 3 – amazing tears (17 Feb.)

From my Day 1 walk, I noted that I wanted to go to church at St. Paul's AME Zion. Unfortunately, I got out the house a bit later than desired, and anticipated not arriving early or on-time, as I wanted. But, thinking "this is a Black church", I figured there would be others arriving at about the same time I got there.

As I approached, I noticed a family of 4 walking in front of the church and thought, "Yay, I won't be too far behind them!" But the family continued to walk past, not entering. "Strange", I thought. Stranger still was the lack of cars around the building and the silence as I approached. On Sundays, one can almost always hear the Amens or an organ or a choir from the outside of a service. I checked to see if it indeed was Sunday, then cautiously entered, expecting ... well ... I don't know, TBH.

What I found was a 4-person congregation (including an older white man) and a pastor playing music from an old laptop. I sat in the back, knowing that my presence was definitely felt. As the service progressed, the next hymn was "Blessed Assurance", which was played (piano accompaniment, much too fast) from the laptop (connected to decent speakers). I sang, and was definitely the loudest because the

key was a bit too high for my voice. This just solidified my presence even more.

The service had two moments of musical selections/presentation. Both were recordings played on the audio system. I felt so uncomfortable during these moments, and I almost got up and played the piano in the corner, but I exercised restraint.

The pastor then stated, “We have a visitor today” (surprise, surprise!). I stood, explained myself, and the eyes of the pastor widened! He suggested I play for the service while I’m here, and I responded “I would love to.”

The most awkward, pathetic moment of my church experiences in life happened next. After the canned music selection came a sermon that reeked of desperation. It was a sermon more for him than the congregation. Towards the end, he talked of how God gives us “gifts”, and often it is very difficult to live your life pursuing these gifts. He then said, “If you want to know how hard it is, ask me.” He went on to say that he felt like giving up often, but every time he tried to “leave” (he said “leave”), God made him stay. So he essentially admitted to his congregation that he wanted and may still want to abandon them. #Whoa

After such a low, I was feeling uneasy. But the most incredible thing happened next. The pastor called for intercessory prayer. We all went to the altar, kneeled, prayed, and received a prayer from the pastor. Afterwards, we were all still at the altar, and the white man said, “I have a confession to make. I haven’t told anyone here this before but ...

“I was a racist.”

I was ... oddly numb. He continued to explain how he grew up in AZ, and there weren’t Black people around. The “Spanish” people and the “Indians” that were around were treated badly, and he heard racial slurs, but he said and did nothing. Tears started to well inside me. He proceeded to say that as he grew and realized how disgusting racism is, he felt ashamed. He was honored that St. Paul’s welcomed him, and he asked for forgiveness, and to one day be considered a brother.

By the time he finished, we were all practically in tears. The pastor and the congregation hugged and embraced him. And I was the last one to give him a significant hug. I also said, “I definitely consider you to be a brother.”

- Anthony R. Green

## **THE PEOPLE UNITED WILL NEVER BE DEFEATED!**

A metaphor can be a slippery beast -- in both music and politics. Charles Ives spends the bulk of *Essays Before a Sonata* pondering the question of musical metaphor: "Can a tune literally represent a stone wall with vines on it or even with nothing on it...[or] the sad thoughts of a bathtub when the water is being let out...[?]"

The image of "the people united..." as a powerful force is undeniable, but whether a force for good or for evil can often be a matter of perspective. Although both the slogan and the song *El Pueblo Unido Jamas Sera Vencido!* ("The People United Will Never Be Defeated!") originated in socialist/workers political movements, the strongest recent image those words call up is the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany, the signal event of the collapse of Communism. And for some, this event is less cause for celebration of "the triumph of the free world" than for apprehension in the face of a strong, united Germany still haunted by ghosts of the Third Reich. The aftermath of the people's success in throwing off the mantle of late Communist dictatorships seems to have spread more dis-unity than unity -- most disastrously in the former Yugoslavia. Dreams are so easily betrayed...

Frederic Rzewski's set of variations on *El Pueblo Unido Jamas Sera Vencido!* is an hour-long metaphor in musical form. Continuing the tradition of massive variation sets for solo keyboard such as Bach's "Goldberg" Variations, Beethoven's "Diabelli" Variations, and Brahms' two books of variations on a theme by Paganini, Rzewski creates a concert work for solo piano of epic proportions, held together not only by the theme from which the variations spring, but also by an overriding form which binds the entire set together as architecture, narrative, and metaphor.

Through his use of variation form, Rzewski creates an aural image of "the people united" -- individuals in all their diversity coming together, bit by bit, to form a unity. The variations are a cornucopia of styles: modal, tonal, atonal, after the manner of a folk song or in the dense, dissonant language of Stockhausen, each variation uses as a basis the structure of the theme, rather than its melody. Counterpoint abounds -- many of the variations are in the form of a two-part invention, and often (such as in the fourth variation) the two voices ping-pong back and forth, creating a third, virtual melody as each voice fills in the gaps left by the other (called "hocket" in medieval music).

As in fractal geometry, the large form of the piece reflects both the form of the theme and the form of each of the variations. The complete version of the theme heard at the very beginning is 36 bars long, and is followed by 36 variations. Leaving off the four-bar introduction and the eight-bar coda (which cry out the rhythm of the slogan *El Pueb-lo! U-ni-do! Ja-mas Se-ra Ven-ci-do!* in English as well as Spanish) the melody of the theme is 24 bars long, made up of six phrases of four bars each. The variations are also 24 bars long, and the 36 variations fall into six groups of six variations each. In the first five groups, we hear five variations, each in a different style or with a different rhythmic, harmonic, or pianistic profile, followed by a sixth variation which combines the elements of the previous five variations: four

bars in the style of the first variation, four bars from the second variation, four bars from the third, and so on, with a concluding four-bar cadence or coda.

Rzewski does not allow his imagination to become imprisoned by his own scheme, however. As early as variation #13, the composer introduces a brief cadenza which develops into the Italian revolutionary song *Bandiera Rossa*. At variation #19, the tempo picks up dramatically and the entire fourth group of variations goes by in a single, toccata-like sweep. The concluding variation of this group turns into a free fantasy on previously heard material rather than an exact reconstruction of earlier elements. In the fifth group of variations, the 24-bar form breaks up entirely, and Rzewski introduces first another quotation (Hans Eislers' *Solidaritatslied* forms the basis of variation #26) and then the extended cadenzas (the first in the minimalist style of early Philip Glass) of variation #27.

In the same manner, the sixth GROUP of variations recapitulates the previous five groups: variation #31 (the first of the group) begins with four bars in the style of variation #1, followed by four bars from #7 (the first of the second group), four bars from #13, etc. Variation #32 recovers elements from the second variation in each group (#2, #8, #14, #20, and #26). And so forth. (The cadences at the end of variations #31 -35 pile up truncated fragments from THESE variations in rapid succession.)

Frederic Rzewski's composition invites the performer to improvise a cadenza before the return of the theme at the end. In his improvisation tonight, Stephen Drury quotes from Anthony Green's piece which he performed at the beginning of the program.

Finally we arrive at variation #36 -- the sixth variation of the sixth group -- which, combining the elements of the five previous variations, becomes a mega-variation which unites the entire range of musics heard over the last three-quarters of an hour.

The people ... united.

- Stephen Drury

## Text & Translation

¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!  
¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!

De pie, cantar que vamos a triunfar.  
Avanzan ya banderas de unidad.  
Y tú vendrás marchando junto a mí  
y así verás  
tu canto y tu bandera florecer,  
la luz de un rojo amanecer  
anuncia ya la vida que vendrá.

De pie, luchar el pueblo va a triunfar.  
Será mayor la vida que vendrá  
a conquistar nuestra felicidad  
y en un clamor  
mil voces de combate se alzarán  
dirán canción de libertad  
con decisión la patria vencerá.

Y ahora el pueblo que se alza en la lucha  
con voz de gigante gritando: ¡adelante!

¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!  
¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!

La patria está forjando la unidad  
de norte a sur se movilizará  
desde el salar ardiente y mineral  
al bosque austral  
unidos en la lucha y el trabajo irán  
la patria cubrirán,  
su paso ya anuncia el porvenir.

De pie, cantar, el pueblo va a triunfar  
millones ya imponen la verdad,  
de acero son ardiente batallón  
sus manos van llevando la justicia y la razón  
mujer, con fuego y con valor  
ya estás aquí junto al trabajador.

Y ahora el pueblo que se alza en la lucha  
con voz de gigante gritando: ¡adelante!

¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!  
¡El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!

- Sergio Ortega

The people united will never be defeated!  
The people united will never be defeated!

Arise, sing, for we will triumph.  
Flags of unity advance.  
Come marching with me,  
and behold the blossoming of  
your song and your flag.  
The light of a red dawn  
already announces the life to come.

Arise, fight, the people will triumph.  
The life to come will be better.  
Let us win our happiness.  
and a clamor  
of a thousand fighting voices will rise,  
and recite a song of liberty.  
With determination the fatherland will win.

And now the people rise in struggle,  
And with a giant's voice they cry: Forward!

The people united will never be defeated!  
The people united will never be defeated!

The fatherland is forging unity,  
It will mobilize from north to south  
From the burning salt flats  
to the southern forests.  
They will go united in work and battle  
They will blanket the nation  
Their steps already announce the future.

Arise, sing, the people will triumph.  
millions now demand the truth  
The ardent battalion is made of steel  
their hands carry justice and reason.  
Woman, with fire and courage  
You stand beside the worker.

And now the people rise in struggle,  
And with a giant's voice they cry: Forward!

The people united will never be defeated!  
The people united will never be defeated!

- translation by Elena Hammel and Stephen Drury