



DES MOINES SYMPHONY

JOSEPH GIUNTA MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR
THE LINDA AND TOM KOEHN ENDOWED CHAIR

77th Season

Masterworks Subscription Series
2014–2015

Seventh and
Final Program

SEASON FINALE: *APPALACHIAN SPRING* – A MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE

Saturday, May 23 at 7:30pm & Sunday, May 24, 2015 at 2:30pm
Des Moines Civic Center

notes

SYMPHONY IN SCULPTURE II

(Duration: c. 24 minutes)

The composer, in describing his new work, writes:

“Symphony In Sculpture II is commissioned by the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra and Joseph Giunta, Music Director & Conductor, in celebration of the continuing, tremendous impact of the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park on the lives of all who visit it in Des Moines.

It was a privilege to compose *Symphony In Sculpture* in 2012 for the Des Moines Symphony and Music Director & Conductor Joseph Giunta, and I am grateful to have composed this new *Symphony In Sculpture II*, for the same. As with *Symphony In Sculpture*, I aspire to “collaborate with the sculptures” by portraying them through sound, hopefully evoking a further dimension to their original artistic vision. *Symphony In Sculpture I and II* are both dedicated to John and Mary Pappajohn. Their sustained and generous gifts to the arts and the larger community of Des Moines inspire each of us towards the betterment of society via the arts.”

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

I. **air gets into everything even nothing** (Ugo Rondinone)

“As Ugo Rondinone’s beautiful olive-tree inspired sculpture is cast in all white, this movement is pitched in all white keys (no sharps or flats, or black keys on the piano). This movement underscores the celestial beauty of olive trees and the sculpture; it is marked *Andante pastorale* with chordal patterns in the strings shifting lyrically and percussionists playing olive tree branch wind chimes, chakra stone wind chimes and glockenspiel. I designed the olive tree wind chimes from olive branches given to me courtesy of Scott Ritterbuck (from the spring pruning of their orchard) at Wind Dance Farm in California.

II. **Untitled** (Ellsworth Kelly)

Ellsworth Kelly was influenced by the ancient Greek sculptures known as kouros or kore—rigid, upright statues of young men and young women—when creating his obelisk or totem-like sculptures, and so, I have attempted to merge Greek and Egyptian-influenced percussion instruments with modern sounds and instruments. It is a fanfare for percussion and brass (with the trumpets taking a prominent role with the orchestration, conjuring up the sound and feel of ancient Egyptian trumpets or the salpinx, a trumpet-like instrument of the ancient Greeks). This is a dialogue about war and peace between the brass instruments, which are usually associated with war and used in preparation for battle, and the percussion instruments. The percussion I have included here is usually associated with ancient goddess festivals and rituals dedicated to Persephone, Demeter and Artemis, and includes small cymbals, gong, clappers (two small stones) and frame drum

(tambourine or Greek defi drum). To bring to mind the modern, the percussionists also play a stainless steel mixing bowl and a piece of scrap metal, a nod to the fact that this Ellsworth Kelly sculpture is made of stainless steel.

III. **Order** (Tony Cragg)

Order is intended to be mysterious and primordial sounding. Since Tony Cragg’s sculpture *Order* refers specifically to trilobites (marine fossils) and the biological classification system, *Order* is comprised of nine sections reflecting this: life, domain, kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, species.

To further create an ancient and natural world sound, I have percussionists playing a capiz shell wind chime, a trilobite, a cephalopod and two 10 million year old fossilized tympanic whale ear bones. The structure of the movement also revolves around the number three (for trilobite): the meter is in 9/8 (three eighth notes per beat) and an extensive use of triads and grouping of triads in sequences of three.

The movement is continually evolving with many permutations. In the middle of the movement is a nine second random event in which musicians play whatever notes they want and in any technique, followed by a sudden gasp or cry. This is a protest against humans’ central role in the sixth extinction.

IV. **Seating for Eight and Café Table I** (Scott Burton)

In one of my first meetings with John and Mary Pappajohn, I asked them questions about the history of the pieces in the Sculpture Park. Mary said she missed having Scott Burton’s *Seating for Eight and Café Table I* in their backyard as it

functioned as seating for their gatherings. As further testament to the generosity of the Pappajohns, *Seating for Eight/Café Table I* now sits in the middle of the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park where anyone and everyone can enjoy this inclusive sculpture. Knowing this, I wanted this movement to honor Mary, just as the *Ancient Forest* movement in the first *Symphony In Sculpture* had honored John. Scott Burton wanted his sculptures to be in public spaces where everyone could use them, and John and Mary Pappajohn have most definitely honored this concept.

Influenced by two remarkable processionalists in the symphonic repertoire: Sir Peter Maxwell Davies’ *An Orkney Wedding With Sunrise* and William Walton’s *Crown Imperial*, *Seating for Eight/Café Table I* is a stately processional pitched in A-flat Major that calls forth the democratic ideals of equality, justice and peace. The democratic circle of this sculpture calls for sweeping lyricism in the music and this is what I have attempted to create. As a symbolic reference to the Deer Island granite that the chairs are comprised of, I have one of the percussionists play two pieces of Deer Island granite, obtained here from Granites of America in Rhode Island. Deer Island granite comes from Maine and is the same stone Jacqueline Kennedy chose for President John F. Kennedy’s Eternal Flame Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery.

V. **Decoy** (Martin Puryear)

Martin Puryear’s minimalist sculpture *Decoy* is a play on the word decoy.

I have scored *Decoy* for strings and wooden birdcalls (starlings and quail) only. I’ve included a quail call as African American slaves used many

hidden messages in their spirituals to help slaves escape to the North. One of these spirituals, *Follow the Drinking Gourd*, contains the line “When the sun comes up and the first quail calls, follow the drinking gourd” (or the big dipper).

For me, this sculpture also resembles a bird decoy used for hunting. This folk-like elegy, however, stands in resistance and instead, celebrates birds, birdsongs and mourns the loss of many bird species. Ultimately, decoy, which can be a ruse for capture, becomes now a celebration of freedom.

VI. **panoramic awareness pavilion** (Olafur Eliasson)

I had the privilege of meeting and talking with Olafur Eliasson last May when he visited Des Moines for the dedication of his *panoramic awareness pavilion*. He spoke eloquently about the sculpture as a study in light, space and plurality. Scored in the bright key of B Major, this movement is a set of variations for the seven colors of the rainbow. Influenced by Olafur Eliasson’s use of the phrase *Your rainbow panorama and Your black horizon* in his previous works, the sections/variations are:

Your dawn fanfare

Marked *bright, sparkling*, this full orchestra fanfare celebrates the evanescence and beauty of dawn.

Your aurora dance

This is a brief and druidic-inspired dance for the aurora borealis in the northern hemisphere and aurora australis in the southern hemisphere.

Your moonbow hymn

Rainbows at night are called moonbows or lunar

rainbows. This variation is a contemplative hymn for strings, glockenspiel and tingshaws (small Tibetan cymbals) honoring nighttime hues.

Your noon flourish

A brass fanfare with timpani, percussion and low strings heralds solar power and energy. The low C string of the cellos and the C attachment of the basses is tuned down half a step to B; similar to the effect Respighi used in the last movement of *The Pines of Rome*. This section/variation is marked radiant, evoking ancient sun power.

Your kaleidoscopic interlude

A mixed meter and energetic dance depicting daily activities in which one of the percussionists plays a sea glass rattle as a symbolic reference to the sculpture's colored glass panels and prisms of color. (The Pacific Ocean sea glass was found

by our daughter, who has a keen eye for it, and the lake glass is from Lake Superior). Another percussionist plays a sistrum, a common percussion instrument in Ethiopia, in tribute to Olafur Eliasson's work with his organization 121Ethiopia and his global project based on Little Sun, a solar-powered LED lamp designed to deliver clean, affordable, reliable light to the 1.6 billion people worldwide without access to the electrical grid.

Your panoramic chorus

The original theme returns, slightly altered, with the full orchestra.

Your luminous paeon at dusk

An extremely high pitched and shimmering episode brings the piece to a celebratory close with huge B Major chords."

Stop by our information counter in the Nollen (West) Lobby or visit dmsymphony.org to purchase your ***SYMPHONY IN SCULPTURE I*** DVD today!

