

CHRISTOPHER ROUSE

The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence at the New York Philharmonic, 2012-2015



Odna Zhizn · Symphonies Nos. 3 & 4 · Prospero's Rooms

New York Philharmonic · Alan Gilbert, *Conductor*

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1	Odna Zhizn (2008) <i>for orchestra</i>	16:05
	Symphony No. 3 (2011)	28:24
2	Allegro	8:33
3	Theme	2:16
4	Variation 1	2:29
5	Variation 2	5:07
6	Variation 3	2:30
7	Variation 4, 5, and Theme	7:29
	Symphony No. 4 (2013)	22:20
8	Felice	10:07
9	Doloroso	12:13
10	Prospero's Rooms (2012) <i>for orchestra</i>	9:23

Total: 76:15

Major support for the commissioning of *Odna Zhizn (A Life)* by the **Francis Goelet Fund**.

This recording is made possible with support from **The Aaron Copland Fund for Music**.

Dacapo is supported by the Danish Arts Foundation **DANISH ARTS FOUNDATION**

The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence

When Alan Gilbert became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in September 2009, one of his cornerstone initiatives was to establish The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence. The post was made possible by a generous gift from Henry R. Kravis in honor of his wife, Marie-Josée. The couple had already been instrumental in supporting the Orchestra's commissioning of new works by leading composers.

Following the successful tenure of the first to hold the post — Finnish composer Magnus Lindberg, whose initial two-year position was extended to a third — Gilbert tapped Christopher Rouse, an American composer whose ties to the Orchestra went back to 1984, with a performance of *The Infernal Machine*. Again, the promise of the collaboration was so warmly and richly fulfilled that the initial appointment for two years was extended to a third.

As Alan Gilbert said at the time of Rouse's appointment, "Chris Rouse is one of the most important composers working today. I've recorded a lot of his music, and it has been a very meaningful and a large part of my musical life for a long time. He has a unique voice and is one of the composers who truly hears what he writes. He doesn't leave anything to chance: he actually shapes the sound and the emotional flow of his music in a way that only great composers can." The Music Director describes Rouse's work as "brilliantly written for the orchestra," and says that it often "combines a dark personal sensibility with a humorous side," and is "not only masterfully crafted but also intensely personal. It is very telling and thoughtful about the human condition in a way that is fairly unique today." The American composer seemed the perfect choice for a maestro and orchestra committed not only to excellence and craft, power and passion, but also to compelling musical storytelling, often in ways that are inexplicit.

The Philharmonic-Rouse connection long preceded Alan Gilbert's Philharmonic appointment, with the World Premieres of his Pulitzer Prize-winning Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra (1992, with Principal Trombone Joseph Alessi, led by Leonard Slatkin) and *Seeing*, for Piano and Orchestra (with Emanuel Ax, led by Mr. Slatkin in 1999 and David Zinman in 2003). Still, after Alan Gilbert became Music Director, it flourished as never before, with the World Premiere of *Odna Zhizn* (2010). *The New York Times* acclaimed both the work and the alchemy of conductor,

orchestra, and composer, writing: "*Odna Zhizn* is a magical score. Against a backdrop of haunting, *pianissimo* strings, which move at a glacial pace, Mr. Rouse imposes short bursts of fast, angular flute figures, darkly mysterious contributions from lower-lying woodwinds, and sudden bursts of *fortissimo* brass. ... The orchestra played it all with an understated but palpable virtuosity."

Once Rouse was selected as The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence, the three-year collaboration would give birth to *Prospero's Rooms* (2013, and hailed by ConcertoNet.com as a "dazzling mini-concerto for orchestra ... an orchestral tour de force"), Symphony No. 4 (2014, "skillful and mature ... the best Rouse I've heard in 20 years," according to *Musical America*), and *Thunderstuck* (2014), as well as the New York Premieres of his Symphony No. 3 (2013) and Oboe Concerto (2013, with Principal Oboe Liang Wang) and performances of *Phantasmata* (2013), Requiem (2014), and *Rapture* (2014), to name only the works led by the Music Director.

For his part, Christopher Rouse believed that the Philharmonic appointment was an act of dedication to the creation of music. "Part of the experience of music should be an exposure to the pulsation of life as we know it, rather than as people in the 18th or 19th century might have known it," he explained. "It is wonderful that Alan is so supportive of contemporary music and so involved in performing and programming it, and I have great admiration for him; our feelings about music line up very, very often." He added: "I've always loved that the Philharmonic plays as though it's a matter of life or death. The musicians' energy, excitement, commitment, and intensity are so exciting and wonderful for a composer. Some of the very best performances I've ever had have been by the Philharmonic. It was thrilling to be able to work with them more closely."

Christopher Rouse

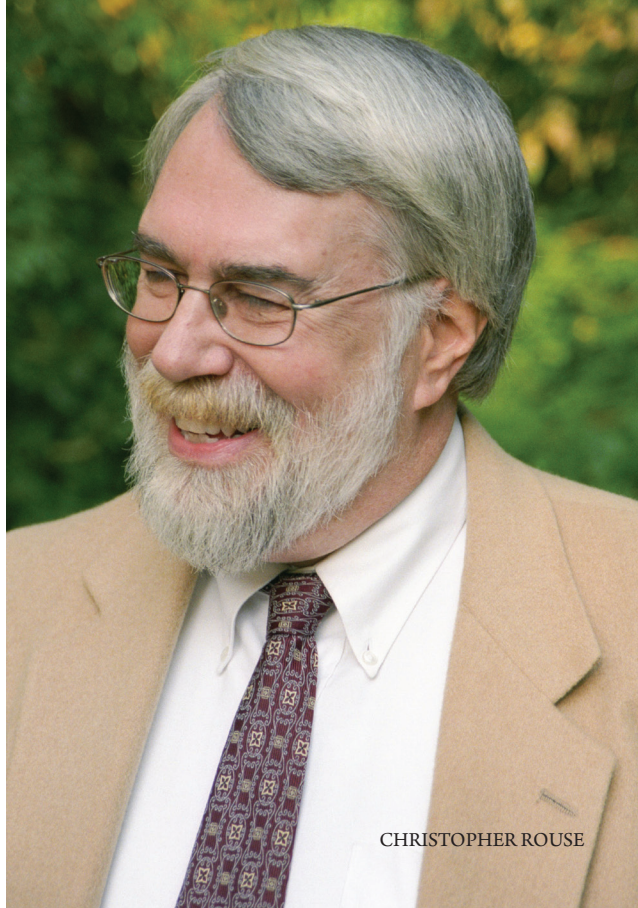
Born February 15, 1949, in Baltimore, Maryland, where he still resides.

Christopher Rouse, who from 2012 to 2015 served as The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence at the New York Philharmonic, is among the most respected composers of his generation, noted for works of impulsive rhythm, vivid color, and catholicity in bringing together the traditions of classical and popular music. He graduated from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music in 1971, and 25 years later his alma mater also awarded him an honorary doctorate. After private study with George Crumb he pursued composition studies with Karel Husa and Robert Palmer at Cornell University, which granted him the DMA degree in 1977. Also influential in his formation was the composer William Schuman, past president of The Juilliard School and a founder of Lincoln Center.

Rouse went on to teach at the University of Michigan, the Eastman School of Music, and The Juilliard School (where he has taught since 1997, full-time since 2002). In 1988, he received the Kennedy Center Friedheim Award for his Symphony No. 1, and in 1993 he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music for his Trombone Concerto, written as part of the New York Philharmonic's 150th Anniversary Commissions. In 1993, he was honored with an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Music, and the Academy elected him to its membership in 2002. Also in 2002, Rouse's *Concert de Gaudi*, a guitar concerto, was given the Grammy Award for Best Classical Contemporary Composition. In 2009, he was named Composer of the Year by *Musical America*, which, in announcing the award, cited particularly his skill as a composer of symphonic scores.

He has served as composer-in-residence for the Indianapolis Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestras, as well as at the Santa Cecilia and Schleswig-Holstein Festivals (both of these at the invitation of Leonard Bernstein), Tanglewood festival, Pacific Music Festival, and Aspen Music Festival. Though he has written in various genres, Rouse is most widely recognized as an orchestral composer. In addition to his Symphonies No. 3 and No. 4, his recent works include *Heimdall's Trumpet*, a concerto for trumpet and orchestra premiered in 2012 by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; *Supplica*, introduced by the Pittsburgh Symphony in 2014; and *Thunderstuck*, a "concert opener" first played in 2014 by the New York Philharmonic.

James M. Keller, *New York Philharmonic Program Annotator, The Leni and Peter May Chair*



CHRISTOPHER ROUSE

About the works

Odna Zhizn

This work was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, Alan Gilbert, Music Director, and composition was completed on November 2, 2008, with the dedication “For Natasha.” Gilbert led the Philharmonic in the world premiere on February 10, 2010, at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, New York City.

From the Composer:

In Russian, “odna zhizn” means “a life.” This fifteen-minute work has been composed in homage to a person of Russian ancestry who is very dear to me. Her life has not been an easy one, and the struggles she has faced are reflected in the sometimes peripatetic nature of the music. While quite a few of my scores have symbolically translated various words into notes and rhythms, this process has been carried to an extreme degree in *Odna Zhizn*: virtually all of the music is focused on the spelling of names and other phrases. Without actually explaining my “code,” I shall just say that each letter of the alphabet is assigned a pitch and (occasionally) a duration, and words will be spelled out musically according to the letters of those words. It was an enormous challenge for me to fashion these materials into what I hoped would be a satisfying musical experience that functions both as the public portrayal of an extraordinary life as well as a private love letter.

Symphony No. 3

This work was composed in 2011, on commission from the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, and completed on February 3, 2011, in Baltimore, Maryland. It is dedicated “To my high school music teacher, John Merrill,” writes the composer, who continues “without his kindness and encouragement I might never have found the fortitude to persevere in my dream of being a composer.” David Robertson led the St. Louis Symphony in the world premiere on May 5, 2011, in Powell Hall, St. Louis, Missouri. Alan Gilbert led the New York Philharmonic in its first performance of the piece on June 20, 2013, at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, New York City.

From the Composer:

Over the years I’ve often toyed with the concept of “rewriting” a work composed by someone else. By this I do not mean “correcting” or “improving” it; rather, my idea has been to take some central aspect of an already composed work and consider it anew.

My Third Symphony is an attempt to do just this. The unusual form of Prokofiev’s Symphony No. 2 furnished the old bottle into which I have tried to pour new wine. Among Prokofiev’s symphonies this one is, I believe, of especially high caliber, though it is rarely programmed. He called it his “symphony of iron and steel,” and it is unquestionably one of his more aggressive and uncompromising scores. Cast in two movements — an opening toccata-like allegro followed by a set of variations — Prokofiev’s own architecture was in turn influenced by that of Beethoven in his final piano sonata. I thus took this structure as my own and tried to maintain Prokofiev’s own proportions between the two movements.

There is little in the way of actual quotation from Prokofiev’s symphony. However, Prokofiev’s opening repeated-note trumpet blasts also begin my symphony, though Prokofiev’s D has here been replaced by an F. There is also a direct quote at the end of my first movement: the solo percussion passage at the end of Prokofiev’s first movement has been transferred here by way of homage. As in the Russian master’s score, the music of this movement is often savage and aggressive.

The second movement of Beethoven’s sonata consists of a theme with four variations and the equivalent movement in Prokofiev’s symphony of a theme with six variations. I decided to split the difference and commit to a theme-with-five-variations form. The variations are of notably disparate character, and the musical language ranges from the dissonant and barbaric to the overtly tonal. After the statement of the theme, the bright and glittering first variation gives way to a highly romantic variation scored for strings and harps only. The third variation is moderate in tempo and mood, but the short fourth is a mostly quiet whirlwind in an extremely fast tempo. The final variation, which follows without pause, possesses a bacchanalian abandon. A final reprise of the theme, again a reference to Prokofiev’s form, brings the symphony to a close. In these variations astute listeners will notice several small nods to particular Prokofiev scores, all intended as a “tip of the cap” to this great Russian composer.

Symphony No. 4

This work was composed in 2013 (completed on June 30 of that year in Baltimore, Maryland), on commission from the New York Philharmonic, which gave its world premiere, conducted by Alan Gilbert, on June 5, 2014, at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, New York City, during the inaugural NY PHIL BIENNIAL.

From the Composer:

The question of what music can “communicate” has been much debated.

It is the most abstract of the arts — e.g., what does a C-sharp “mean”? — and yet it clearly seems to have the capacity to speak volumes to the listener about the myriad aspects of life. Of course, Stravinsky opined that music was incapable of saying anything at all, that the “meaning” was supplied by the listener rather than by the music itself.

Ultimately this is a debate for aestheticians, not composers. But I do fervently believe that there is a “lingua franca” of musical expression, one that most composers have understood over the years and have employed to convey specific emotional states. Of course, some composers have gone even further, attempting to tell actual stories or to describe events in sound. This so-called “program music” can be quite detailed (Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben*) or more vague (Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony). Sometimes composers have had a great deal to say about their expressive intent in a given musical work; at other times they’ve had little if anything to say. Asked whether listeners would devise the programmatic meaning of his *Pathétique* Symphony, Tchaikovsky famously replied, “Let them guess.”

For those of my scores in which I have had a reasonably specific expressive intent, I have usually tried to be open about the nature of that intent. However, there have been a few occasions when I have felt the need to say very little in this regard. The above paragraphs are preamble to the fact that, while I did have a particular meaning in mind when composing my Symphony No. 4, I prefer to keep it to myself. Some listeners may find the piece baffling but will nonetheless have to guess.

Prospero’s Rooms

This work was composed in 2012 (completed on August 13 in Baltimore, Maryland), on commission from the New York Philharmonic and is dedicated to Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic, who gave the world premiere on April 17, 2013, at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, New York City.

From the Composer:

In the days when I would have still contemplated composing an opera, my preferred source was Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Masque of the Red Death*. A marvelous story full of both symbolism and terror, it is only five pages long and would thus require “padding” instead of the usual brutal cutting of the story that operas so often require. I had contemplated some sort of melding of the Poe story with Leonid Andreyev’s symbolist play *The Black Maskers*. However, there is no opera in my horizon, and so I decided to redirect my ideas into what might be considered an overture to an unwritten opera.

The story concerns a vain prince, Prospero, who summons his friends to his palace and locks them in so that they will remain safe from the Red Death, a plague that is ravaging the countryside. He commands that there be a ball — the “masque” — but that no one is to wear red. But of course a figure clad all in red *does* appear; it is the Red Death, and it claims the lives of all in the castle.

Central to the story is the castle’s series of seven conjoined rooms, each furnished entirely in a single color and with a Gothic stained glass window of the same color. First is the blue room, followed by the purple, the green, the orange, the white, and the violet rooms. Last, buried in the deepest recess of the castle, is the black room. Only here is the window of a different color — it is crimson red. In the corner is an enormous ebony clock whose mournful tone so disquiets the visitors that they freeze, terrified, whenever it tolls. It is in this room, of course, that Prince Prospero meets his end at the hands of the Red Death.

Prospero’s Rooms is only intermittently programmatic. The opening music is intended to “set the scene.” The centerpiece is the middle section, an allegro that explores the rooms in the order presented by Poe. Rather than attempt to describe the rooms, I have tried to depict the actual colors themselves. The music slows again with the arrival of the seventh room and this point becomes more explicitly narrative in nature.

Perhaps the most specifically programmatic element of the piece is the sound of the ebony clock, which is heard throughout the work and which introduces each room as we enter it.

© Christopher Rouse



ALAN GILBERT

The performers

Music Director **Alan Gilbert** began his New York Philharmonic tenure in 2009, the first native New Yorker in the post. He and the Philharmonic have introduced the positions of The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence, The Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence, and Artist-in-Association; *CONTACT!*, the new-music series; NY PHIL BIENNIAL, an exploration of today's music; and New York Philharmonic Global Academy, collaborations with partners worldwide offering training of pre-professional musicians, often alongside performance residencies. As *The New Yorker* wrote, "Gilbert has made an indelible mark on the orchestra's history and that of the city itself."

Alan Gilbert's 2015–16 Philharmonic highlights include R. Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben* to welcome Concertmaster Frank Huang; Carnegie Hall's Opening Night Gala; five World Premieres; and seminal works by Mahler, Sibelius, and Mozart. He co-curates the second NY PHIL BIENNIAL and performs violin in Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Temple of Dendur. He leads the Orchestra as part of the Shanghai Orchestra Academy and Residency Partnership and appears at Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West. Philharmonic-tenure highlights include acclaimed stagings of Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*, Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* starring Bryn Terfel and Emma Thompson (for which Mr. Gilbert was nominated for a 2015 Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Direction), and Honegger's *Joan of Arc at the Stake* starring Marion Cotillard; 24 World Premieres; The Nielsen Project; Verdi's Requiem and Bach's B-minor Mass; the score from *2001: A Space Odyssey* alongside the film; Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony on the tenth anniversary of 9/11; and nine tours around the world. In August 2015 he led the Mahler Chamber Orchestra in the U.S. Stage Premiere of George Benjamin's *Written on Skin*, co-presented as part of the Lincoln Center–New York Philharmonic Opera Initiative.

Conductor laureate of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and former principal guest conductor of Hamburg's NDR Symphony Orchestra, Alan Gilbert regularly conducts leading ensembles including the Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw, Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Leipzig's Gewandhaus, and Bavarian Radio Symphony orchestras as well as Orchestra della Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. He has appeared at The Metropolitan, Los Angeles, Zurich, Royal Swedish,

and Santa Fe opera companies. This season Mr. Gilbert makes debuts with four great European orchestras — Filarmonica della Scala, Dresden Staatskapelle, London Symphony, and Academy of St Martin in the Fields — and returns to The Cleveland Orchestra and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra.

Director of Conducting and Orchestral Studies and the William Schuman Chair in Musical Studies at The Juilliard School, Mr. Gilbert has conducted on the Grammy Award-winning recordings of John Adams's *Doctor Atomic*, with the Met, and *Poèmes*, with Renée Fleming. He studied at Harvard University, The Curtis Institute of Music, and Juilliard and was assistant conductor of The Cleveland Orchestra. His accolades include an Honorary Doctor of Music degree from Curtis; Columbia University's Ditson Conductor's Award; election to The American Academy of Arts & Sciences in 2014; a 2015 Foreign Policy Association Medal; and being named Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. alangilbert.com

The **New York Philharmonic** plays a leading cultural role in New York City, the United States, and the world, and this season alone will connect with up to 50 million music lovers through live concerts in New York City and on its worldwide tours and residencies; digital recording series; international broadcasts on television, radio, and online; and as a resource through its wide range of education programs and the New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives.

A champion of the new music of its time, the Philharmonic has commissioned and/or premiered works by leading composers from every era since its founding — Dvořák's Symphony No. 9, *From the New World*; Gershwin's Concerto in F; and Berio's Sinfonia, in addition to U.S. Premieres including Beethoven's Symphonies Nos. 8 and 9 and Brahms's Symphony No. 4. Recent highlights include John Adams's Pulitzer Prize-winning *On the Transmigration of Souls* and *Scheherazade.2* — Dramatic symphony for violin and orchestra; Esa-Pekka Salonen's Piano Concerto; Christopher Rouse's Symphony No. 4; Melinda Wagner's Trombone Concerto; Wynton Marsalis's *Swing Symphony* (Symphony No. 3); Magnus Lindberg's Piano Concerto No. 2; and the World Premieres of 21 works in *CONTACT!*, the new-music series.

A resource for its community and the world, the New York Philharmonic complements annual free concerts across the city — including the Concerts in the Parks, Presented by Didi and Oscar

Schafer — with Philharmonic Free Fridays and a wide range of education programs, among them the famed Young People's Concerts and Philharmonic Schools, an immersive classroom program that reaches thousands of New York City students. Committed to developing tomorrow's leading orchestral musicians, the Philharmonic has established the New York Philharmonic Global Academy, collaborations with partners worldwide offering training of pre-professional musicians, often alongside performance residencies. These include the Shanghai Orchestra Academy and Residency Partnership and collaborations with Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West and The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University.

The Philharmonic has appeared in 432 cities in 63 countries on five continents — including the groundbreaking 1930 tour of Europe; the unprecedented 1959 tour to the USSR; the historic 2008 visit to Pyongyang, D.P.R.K., the first there by an American orchestra; and the Orchestra's debut in Hanoi, Vietnam, in 2009. An International Associate of London's Barbican Centre, the Orchestra appears there in biennial residencies.

Founded in 1842 by local musicians led by American-born Ureli Corelli Hill, the New York Philharmonic is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. The New York Philharmonic has made almost 2,000 recordings since 1917, including several Grammy Award winners, and its self-produced digital recording series continues in the 2015–16 season. Notable composers and conductors who have led the Philharmonic include Dvořák, Klemperer, Richard Strauss, Stravinsky, Copland, Mitropoulos (Music Director, 1949–58), and Tennstedt. Alan Gilbert began his tenure as Music Director in September 2009, succeeding musical giants including Lorin Maazel; Kurt Masur (named Music Director Emeritus in 2002); Zubin Mehta; Pierre Boulez; Leonard Bernstein (named Laureate Conductor in 1969); Arturo Toscanini; and Gustav Mahler. nyphil.org

New York Philharmonic



The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence

Da Alan Gilbert blev chefdirigent og kunstnerisk leder af New York Filharmonikerne i september 2009, var en af hans hjørnestene initiativet til at oprette en stilling som *Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence*. Denne post blev muliggjort af en generøs gave fra Henry R. Kravis til ære for hans kone, Marie-Josée. Parret havde allerede været behjælpelige med at støtte orkestrets bestillinger af nye værker skrevet af førende komponister. Efter den vellykkede ansættelsesperiode med den første komponist, som bestred denne post — den finske komponist Magnus Lindberg, hvis første toårige kontrakt blev forlænget med et ekstra år — udpegede Gilbert Christopher Rouse, en amerikansk komponist hvis tilknytning til orkestret gik tilbage til 1984, med en opførelse af *The Infernal Machine*. Igen blev løftet om samarbejde så varmt og helhjertet opfyldt, at den først aftalte ansættelse på to år blev udvidet med et tredje.

Som Alan Gilbert sagde ved Rouses ansættelse, “Chris Rouse er en af tidens bedste komponister. Jeg har indspillet en hel masse af hans musik, og det har været meget meningsfuldt og udgjort en stor del af mit musikalske liv i lang tid. Han har en unik stemme og er en af de komponister, som i sandhed hører, hvad han skriver. Han efterlader intet til tilfældigheden: Han former lyden og det følelsesmæssige forløb i sin musik på en måde, som kun store komponister kan.” Chefdirigenten beskriver Rouses værker som “genialt skrevet for orkester,” og siger, at de ofte “kombinerer en mørk, personlig følsomhed med en humoristisk side,” og er “ikke kun mesterligt udformet, men også stærkt personlige. De er meget sigende og reflekterer over den menneskelige tilstand på en måde, som er temmelig enestående i dag.” Den amerikanske komponist virkede som det perfekte valg for en maestro og et orkester, som ikke kun har helliget sig fortræffelighed og håndværk, kraftfuldhed og lidenskab, men også fængslende musikalsk historiefortælling, ofte på måder, der ikke er åbenlyse.

Forbindelsen mellem Filharmonikerne og Rouse begyndte længe før Alan Gilberts ansættelse hos Filharmonikerne, med verdenspremieren på hans Pulitzerpris-vindende *Koncert for Trækbasun og Orkester* (1992, med førstebasunist Joseph Alessi, dirigeret af Leonard Slatkin) og *Seeing* for klaver og orkester (med Emanuel Ax, dirigeret af Slatkin i 1999 og David Zinman i 2003). Men efter at Alan Gilbert blev chefdirigent, udfoldede forbindelsen sig som aldrig før med verdenspremieren på *Odna Zhizn* (2010). *New York Times* lovpriste både værket og kemien mellem dirigent, orkester

og komponist. Avisen skrev: “*Odna Zhizn* er et eventyrligt værk. Hen over en baggrund af uafrystelige *pianissimo*-strygere i uhyre langsom bevægelse lægger Rouse korte udbrud af hurtige, kantede fløjtefigurer, dunkle og mystiske bidrag fra de dybere træblæsere og pludselige udbrud af *fortissimo*-messagingblæsere ... Orkestret afleverede det hele med underspillet, men umiskendelig virtuositet.”

Da Rouse blev valgt som *Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence*, affødte det treårige samarbejde værket *Prospero's Rooms* (2013, hyldet af ConcertoNet.com som en “blændende mini-koncert for orkester ... en kraftpræstation af orkestret”), den 4. symfoni (2014, “behændig og moden ... det bedste, jeg har hørt fra Rouse i 20 år,” ifølge *Musical America*) og *Thunderstuck* (2014) og ligeledes New York-premiererne på hans 3. symfoni (2013) og Obokoncert (2013, med førsteoboist Liang Wang) og opførelser af *Phantasmata* (2013), *Requiem* (2014) og *Rapture* (2014). Og dette er kun listen af værker dirigeret af chefdirigenten.

På sin side så Christopher Rouse ansættelsen som bevis på Filharmonikernes ønske om aktivt at støtte, at der bliver skrevet ny musik. “En del af den musikalske oplevelse bør være et møde med livets puls, som vi kender det, snarere end som man måske kendte det i det 18. eller 19. århundrede,” forklarer han. “Det er vidunderligt, at Alan i den grad støtter op om samtidsmusik og er så engageret i dens fremførelse og programsætning, og det beundrer jeg ham meget for; vores følelser omkring musik stemmer meget ofte overens.” Han tilføjer: “Jeg har altid elsket den måde Filharmonikerne spiller som om det gjaldt liv eller død. Musikernes energi, begejstring, engagement og intensitet er så spændende og fantastisk for en komponist. Nogle af de bedste opførelser, jeg nogensinde har oplevet, har været med Filharmonikerne. Det var en fryd at arbejde med dem på nært hold.”

Christopher Rouse

Født 15. februar 1949 i Baltimore, Maryland, hvor han stadig bor.

Christopher Rouse, som tjente 2012-2015 som *Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence* hos New York Filharmonikerne, er en af sin generations mest respekterede komponister, kendt for værker med impulsiv rytme, stærke farver og alsidighed i deres sammenførelse af traditionerne fra klassisk og populær musik. Han dimitterede fra Konservatoriet ved Oberlin College i 1971, og 25 år senere skænkede hans alma mater ham en æresdoktorgrad. Efter at have studeret privat hos George Crumb, gennemførte han sine komponiststudier hos Karel Husa og Robert Palmer ved Cornell Universitet, hvor han fik sin titel *Doctor of Musical Arts* i 1977. En anden stor indflydelse på hans udvikling var komponisten William Schuman, tidligere rektor på Juilliard School og medgrundlægger af Lincoln Center.

Rouse blev underviser på Universitet i Michigan, Eastman School of Music og Juilliard School (hvor han har undervist siden 1997, på fuld tid siden 2002). I 1988 modtog han Kennedy Center Friedheim-prisen for sin 1. symfoni, og i 1993 vandt han Pulitzer-musikprisen for sin Concert for Trækbasun, som blev skrevet som en del af bestillingerne til New York Filharmonikernes 150 års jubilæum. I 1993 blev han hædret med *American Academy of Arts and Letters'* musikpris, og akademiet valgte ham som medlem i 2002. I 2002 modtog Rouses guitarconcert *Concert de Gaudí* en Grammy Award for bedste nutidige klassiske komposition. I 2009 blev han udnævnt til årets komponist af *Musical America*, som ved udnævnelsen specifikt omtalte hans evne til at komponere symfoniske værker.

Han har tjent som *composer-in-residence* for Indianapolis Symfoniorkester, Baltimore Symfoniorkester og Pittsburgh Symfoniorkester og ved Santa Cecilia og Schleswig-Holstein festivalerne (i begge tilfælde inviteret af Leonard Bernstein), Tanglewood Festival, Pacific Music Festival og Aspen Music Festival. Selv om han har skrevet i flere forskellige genrer, er Rouse bedst kendt som orkesterkomponist. Ud over hans 3. og 4. symfoni omfatter hans seneste arbejde *Heimdall's Trumpet*, en koncert for trompet og orkester, som fik sin førsteopførelse i 2012 med Chicago Symfoniorkester; *Supplica*, fremført af Pittsburgh Symfoniorkester i 2014; og *Thunderstuck*, et "koncert-åbningsværk", først spillet i 2014 af New York Filharmonikerne.

James M. Keller, programnoteansvarlig, New York Filharmonikerne, *The Leni and Peter May Chair*



Christopher Rouse with Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic after the world premiere of *Prospero's Rooms*, April 17, 2013

Om værkerne

Odna Zhizn

Dette værk blev bestilt af New York Filharmonikerne med Alan Gilbert som chefdirigent. Kompositionen blev afsluttet 2. november, 2008, og værkets tilegnelse lyder "Til Natasha." Gilbert dirigerede Filharmonikerne i verdenspremieren 10. februar, 2010, på Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, New York City.

Fra komponisten: På russisk betyder *odna zhizn* "et liv." Dette femten minutter lange arbejde blev komponeret som en hyldest til en person af russisk herkomst, som står mig meget nær. Hendes liv har ikke været let, og de kampe, hun har kæmpet, er afspejlet i musikken til tider omkringflakkende karakter. Mens en stor del af mine værker rent symbolsk har oversat ord til toner og rytmer, er denne fremgangsmåde brugt i en ekstrem grad i *Odna Zhizn*: så godt som al musikken er fokuseret på at stave navne og såmænd hele sætninger. Uden helt nøjagtigt at afsløre min "kode", skal jeg blot sige, at hvert bogstav i alfabetet er blevet tildelt en tone og (til tider) en tonelængde, og der bliver stavet til ord musikalsk ud fra bogstaverne i disse ord. Det var en kolossal udfordring for mig at forme dette stof til noget, som jeg håbede ville blive til en tilfredsstillende musikalsk oplevelse – noget som både kunne fungere som en offentlig afbildning af et ekstraordinært liv og som et privat kærlighedsbrev.

3. Symfoni

Dette værk blev komponeret i 2011 på bestilling fra St. Louis Symfoniorkester, Singapore Symfoniorkester, Baltimore Symfoniorkester og Stockholms Kongelige Filharmonikere, og blev færdigt 3. februar, 2011, i Baltimore, Maryland. Tilegnelsen lyder "Til min musiklærer fra gymnasiet, John Merrill," skriver komponisten, som fortsætter: "Uden hans venlighed og opmuntring havde jeg måske aldrig fundet styrken til at forfølge min drøm om at blive komponist." David Robertson dirigerede St. Louis Symfoniorkester i verdenspremieren d. 5. maj, 2011, i Powell Hall, St. Louis, Missouri. Alan Gilbert dirigerede New York Filharmonikerne i deres første fremførelse af værket d. 20. juni, 2013, i Avery Fisher Hall på Lincoln Center, New York City.

Fra komponisten: I årenes løb har jeg ofte leget med tanken om at "omskrive" et værk, som en anden har skrevet. Med dette mener jeg ikke at "rette" eller "forbedre" det; men snarere at tage et centralt aspekt i et allerede eksisterende værk og betragte det på ny.

Min tredje symfoni er et forsøg på at gøre netop dette. Den usædvanlige form i Prokofievs 2. symfoni gav mig den gamle flaske, hvori jeg har forsøgt at hælde ny vin. Af Prokofievs symfonier mener jeg, at denne er af særlig høj kaliber, selv om den sjældent sættes på programmet. Han kaldte det sin "symfoni af jern og stål," og det er ubestrideligt et af hans mest aggressive og kompromisløse værker. Støbt i to satser — en indledende toccata-agtig allegro efterfulgt af en række variationer – var Prokofievs arkitektur selv inspireret af Beethovens i hans sidste klaversonate. Således tog jeg denne struktur til mig og forsøgte at bibeholde Prokofievs proportioner mellem de to satser.

Der er ikke meget i retning af egentlige citater fra Prokofievs symfoni. Prokofievs indledende, gentagne trompet-stød på samme tone er dog også med i begyndelsen af min symfoni, selv om Prokofievs D her er blevet erstattet med et F. Der er også et direkte citat i slutningen af min første sats: solo-slagtøjspassagen i slutningen af Prokofievs første sats spilles her som en hyldest til ham. Ligesom i den russiske mesters partitur er musikken i denne sats ofte vild og aggressiv.

Den anden sats af Beethovens sonate består af et tema med fire variationer og den tilsvarende sats i Prokofievs symfoni af seks variationer. Jeg besluttede mig for at mødes på halvvejen og satse på en form med tema og fem variationer. Variationerne er af bemærkelsesværdigt forskelligartet karakter, og det musikalske sprog spænder fra det dissonerende og barbariske til det åbenlyst tonale. Efter at temaet er angivet, efterfølges den lyse og glitrende første variation af en meget romantisk variation instrumenteret udelukkende med strygere og harper. Den tredje variation er moderat i tempo og stemning, mens den korte fjerde er en overvejende stilfærdig hvirvelvind i et ekstremt hurtigt tempo. Den sidste variation, som følger uden pause, har en bakkantisk løsslupenhed. En sidste reprise af temaet, igen en reference til Prokofievs form, fører symfonien til ende. I disse variationer vil opmærksomme lyttere bemærke adskillige små hilsener til bestemte værker af Prokofiev, alle ment som en anerkendende gestus til den store russiske komponist.

Den 4. Symfoni

Dette værk blev komponeret i 2013 (afsluttet 30. juni samme år i Baltimore, Maryland), på bestilling fra New York Filharmonikerne, som spillede verdenspremieren, dirigeret af Alan Gilbert, d. 5. juni, 2014, i Avery Fisher Hall på Lincoln Center, New York City, under den første 'NY PHIL BIENNIAL'.

Fra komponisten: Spørgsmålet om hvad musik kan “kommunikere” er meget omdiskuteret.

Det er den mest abstrakte kunstform — f.eks. hvad “betyder” et cis? — men samtidig kan det siges, at musik har en evne til, bedre end ord, at fortælle lytterne om en bred vifte af livets aspekter. Stravinskij mente selvfølgelig, at musik var ude af stand til at sige noget som helst, og at “meningen” blev leveret af lytteren snarere end af musikken selv.

I sidste ende er det en debat for æstetikere, ikke komponister. Men jeg tror fuldt og fast på, at der er et fællessprog i den musikalske udtryksform, som de fleste komponister har forstået i årenes løb og har benyttet sig af til at formidle konkrete følelser. Der er selvfølgelig nogle komponister, som har taget det et skridt videre og forsøger at fortælle faktiske historier eller at beskrive hændelser med lyd. Denne såkaldte “programmusik” kan være ganske detaljeret (f.eks. Strauss’ *Ein Heldenleben*) eller mere svævende (Sjostakovitj’ 5. Symfoni). Nogle gange har komponister haft en hel masse at sige om deres udtryksmæssige hensigt med et bestemt værk; andre gange har de kun haft lidt eller ingenting at sige. Da Tjajkovskij blev spurgt om, hvorvidt lytterne ville gennemskue den programatiske mening med hans *Pathétique* symfoni, gav han det berømte svar, “Lad dem gætte.”

Med de værker, hvor jeg har haft en nogenlunde specifik hensigt med udtrykket, har jeg normalt prøvet at være åben omkring karakteren af denne hensigt. Der har imidlertid været nogle få tilfælde, hvor mit behov for at sige noget i den retning har været meget lille. Det ovenstående bygger op til det faktum, at jeg, skønt jeg havde en særlig betydning i baghovedet, mens jeg komponerede min 4. symfoni, foretrækker jeg at holde denne for mig selv. Nogle lyttere vil måske mene, at værket er forvirrende, men ikke desto mindre må de gætte sig frem.

Prospero's Rooms

Dette værk blev komponeret i 2012 (afsluttet d. 13. august i Baltimore, Maryland), på bestilling fra New York Filharmonikerne og er tilegnet Alan Gilbert og New York Filharmonikerne, som spillede den til verdenspremieren d. 17. april, 2013, i Avery Fisher Hall på Lincoln Center, New York City.

Fra komponisten: Dengang jeg endnu overvejede at komponere en opera, var min foretrukne kilde Edgar Allan Poes *Den røde døds maske* – en eventyrlig historie fyldt med både symbolik og rædsel, som kun er fem sider lang og således ville skulle “polstres”, i stedet for at man skulle skære brutalt i historien, sådan som det ofte er nødvendigt med operaer. Jeg havde overvejet at forene Poes historie på en eller anden måde med Leonid Andrejevs symbolistiske stykke *De sortmaskerede*. Der er dog ikke udsigt til, at jeg skal skrive nogen opera, og derfor besluttede jeg at omdirigere mine idéer over i noget, som kunne betragtes som ouverturen til en uskreven opera.

Historien handler om en forfølgelig fyrste, Prospero, som kalder sine venner til sit palads og låser dem inde, så de er beskyttet mod den røde død, en pest, der hærger landet. Han befaler, at der skal holdes et maskebal — men at ingen må klæde sig i rødt. Men selvfølgelig dukker der en skikkelse op, som er helt klædt i rødt; det er Den Røde Død, og den vil tage livet af alle slottets gæster.

Et centralt element i historien er, at slottet har syv forbundne rum, hver for sig dekoreret udelukkende i én enkelt farve og med gotiske vinduer i glasmosaik i samme farve. Først er der det blå rum, herefter det lilla, det grønne, det orange, det hvide og det violette rum. Til sidst, gemt væk i slottets fjerneste niche, er der det sorte rum. Her har vinduet dog en anden farve — det er blodrødt. I hjørnet står der et enormt ur af ibenholt, hvis sørgmodige klang skræmmer gæsterne så meget, at de stivner af skræk, hver gang uret slår. Det er selvfølgelig i dette rum, at prins Prospero møder sit endeligt i Den Røde Døds vold.

Prospero's Rooms er kun programmatisk indimellem. Åbningsmusikken har til formål at sætte rammerne. Det vigtigste stykke er midt i værket, en allegro, som udforsker rummene i den rækkefølge, de præsenteres af Poe. Snarere end at forsøge at beskrive rummene har jeg forsøgt at skildre de faktiske farver. Musikken bliver langsom igen, da endelig det syvende rum er nået, og på det tidspunkt får den en mere eksplicit fortællende karakter.

Måske er det mest konkret programatiske element i værket ibenholturets lyd, som kan høres igennem hele værket, og som lyder, hver gang vi går ind i et nyt rum.

© Christopher Rouse

Alan Gilbert conducting the New York Philharmonic
at the concert on which Rouse's Symphony No. 3
received its New York premiere, June 5, 2014



De medvirkende

Alan Gilbert har siden september 2009 været chefdirigent for og kunstnerisk leder af New York Philharmonic som den første indfødte new yorker på posten. Sammen med Filharmonikerne har han introduceret nye initiativer som The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence, The Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence, ny musik-serien *CONTACT!* og NY PHIL BIENNIAL, hvor Gilbert og orkestret går på opdagelse i samtidsmusikken; foruden New York Philharmonic Global Academy, som er samarbejder med partnere verden over om at tilbyde undervisning af kommende professionelle musikere. Som *The New Yorker* wrote, "Gilbert har sat sit udslettelige præg på orkestrets historie lige såvel som på byen."

Alan Gilberts filharmoniske højdepunkter i 2015–16 tæller Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*, hvor koncertmester Frank Huang samtidig bydes velkommen; Carnegie Hall's Opening Night Gala; fem uropførelser; og skelsættende værker af Mahler, Sibelius og Mozart. Han er medkurator for den anden NY PHIL BIENNIAL og optræder på violin i Messiaens *Kvartet til tidens ende* på Metropolitan museet. Han leder orkestret som del af Shanghai Orchestra Academy og optræder på Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West. Gilberts højdepunkter hos NY Phil gennem årene tæller bl.a. roste iscenesættelser af Ligetis *Le Grand Macabre*, Janáček's *Den fiffige lille ræv*, Stephen Sondheims *Sweeney Todd* med Bryn Terfel og Emma Thompson (for hvilken Gilbert var nomineret til en Emmy Award i 2015 for 'Outstanding Music Direction'), og Honeggers *Jeanne d'Arc på bålet* med Marion Cotillard; derudover 24 uropførelser; The Nielsen Project; Verdis Requiem and Bachs h-mol messe; koncertopførelsen af filmmusikken til *2001: A Space Odyssey* sammen med filmen; Mahlers 2. symfoni *Genopstandelsen* på 10-årsdagen for 11. september; og ni verdensturneer. I August 2015 dirigerede han Mahler Chamber Orchestra i USA. Premiere på George Benjamins *Written on Skin*, som led i Lincoln Center–New York Philharmonic Opera Initiative.

Alan Gilbert er æresdirigent for Stockholm Filharmonikerne og 1. gæstedirigent for NDR Symfoniorkester i Hamborg. Han dirigerer regelmæssigt verdens førende orkestre som Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Amsterdams Royal Concertgebouw, Berlin Filharmonikerne, München Filharmonikerne, Leipzigs Gewandhaus, og de bayerske radioorkestre samt Orchestra della Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia og Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. Han har optrådt

med operakompagnier som The Met i New York, i Los Angeles, Zürich, Den Kgl. Svenske samt i Santa Fe. I denne sæson får Gilbert sin debut med fire store europæiske orkestre – Filarmonica della Scala, Dresden Staatskapelle, London Symphony og Academy of St. Martin in the Fields – and vender tilbage til The Cleveland Orchestra og Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra.

Alan Gilbert er leder af dirigent- og orkesterstudierne på New Yorks berømte Juilliard School, hvor han er tildelt William Schuman Chair in Musical Studies. Han har dirigeret på Grammy-vindende indspilninger som John Adams's *Doctor Atomic* med the Met og *Poèmes* med René Fleming. Han har studeret på Harvard University, The Curtis Institute of Music på Juilliard, og han har været assisterende dirigent for The Cleveland Orchestra. Gilbert er udnævnt til æresdoktor ved The Curtis Institute of Music, har modtaget Columbia Universitys Ditson dirigentpris, er medlem i The American Academy of Arts & Sciences i 2014, har modtaget Foreign Policy Association Medal i 2015 og er udnævnt til Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres..

alangilbert.com

New York Philharmonic spiller en førende rolle kulturelt i New York City såvel som i resten af verden. I denne sæson alene vil orkestret nå ud til 50 millioner musikelskere via livekoncerter i New York og på turneer rundt i verden; ligeledes via digitale indspilningsserier, internationale optrædere på TV, i radio og online og som en ressource gennem vidtrækkende undervisningsprogrammer og New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives.

Siden grundlæggelsen har orkestret bestilt og uropført værker af førende komponister gennem tiderne – bl.a. Dvořáks 9. symfoni *Fra den ny verden*, Gershwins klaverkoncert i F-dur og Berios Sinfonia, foruden amerikanske førsteopførelser af Beethovens 8. og 9. symfoni og Brahms' 4. symfoni. Denne banebrydende tradition fortsætter i dag, hvor seneste highlights tæller John Adams' Pulitzer Prize-belønnede *On the Transmigration of Souls* og *Scheherazade.2* — Dramatisk symfoni for violin og orkester; Esa-Pekka Salonens klaverkoncert; Christopher Rouses Symfoni nr. 4 og *Thunderstuck*; Melinda Wagners Trombonekoncert; Wynton Marsalis' *Swing Symphony* (Symfoni nr. 3); Magnus Lindbergs 2. klaverkoncert og uropførelserne af 21 værker i ny musik-serien *CONTACT!*.

New York Philharmonic er en ressource både lokalt og i hele verden og tilbyder årligt gratis koncerter rundt om i byen – deriblandt Concerts in the Parks – med Philharmonic Free Fridays

og et bredt udvalg af undervisningsprogrammer, bl.a. de kendte Young People's Concerts og Philharmonic Schools – et dybtgående skoleklasseprogram, som når tusinder af elever i New York City. Filharmonikerne forpligter sig også til udviklingen af morgendagens førende orkestere musikere gennem New York Philharmonic Global Academy, som samarbejder med partnere verden over om at tilbyde undervisning af kommende professionelle musikere. Bl.a. sammen med Shanghai Symphony Orchestra og Residency Partnership og gennem samarbejde med Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West og The Shepherd School of Music ved Rice University.

Filharmonikerne har gennem tiden optrådt i 432 byer i 63 lande, bl.a. på de banebrydende turnéer til Europa i 1930 og Sovjet i 1959 samt ved det historiske besøg i Nordkoreas hovedstad Pyongyang i 2008 – som det første amerikanske orkester nogensinde – og orkestrets debut i Hanoi, Vietnam, i 2009. Som international partner til Londons Barbican Centre optræder orkestret dér i biennale-sammenhæng.

New York Philharmonic blev grundlagt i 1842 af lokale musikere med den amerikansk-fødte Ureli Corelli Hill i spidsen og er dermed det ældste symfoniorkester i USA og et af de ældste i verden. Siden 1917 har Filharmonikerne lavet næsten 2000 indspilninger, deriblandt adskillige Grammy-vindere, og orkestrets egenproducerede digitale indspilningsserie fortsætter i 2015–16 sæsonen. Store komponister og dirigenter, som har ledet Filharmonikerne, tæller Dvořák, Klemperer, Richard Strauss, Stravinskij, Copland, Mitropoulos (musikchef 1949–58) og Tennstedt. Alan Gilbert begyndte sin ansættelse som musikchef i september 2009 og efterfulgte giganter som Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur (udnævnt til emeritus kunstnerisk leder i 2002), Zubin Mehta, Pierre Boulez, Leonard Bernstein (udnævnt til æresdirigent i 1969), Arturo Toscanini and Gustav Mahler. *nyphil.org*

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Instruments made possible, in part, by **The Richard S. and Karen LeFrak Endowment Fund.**

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DDD

Recorded at Avery Fisher Hall (now named David Geffen Hall), Lincoln Center, New York City

Executive Producer: Vince Ford

Producers: Lawrence Rock and Mark Travis

Recording and mastering engineer: Lawrence Rock

Assistant Producers: Nick Bremer (*Odna Zhizn*) and Ian Reilly

Odna Zhizn recorded live February 20, 2010

Symphony No. 3 recorded live June 20, 2013

Symphony No. 4 recorded live June 5, 2014

Prospero's Rooms recorded live April 17, 2013

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Liner notes on the music: Christopher Rouse

Danish translation of liner notes: Alma Manley

Proofreader: Svend Ravnkilde

Photo p. 7: © Jeffrey Herman

Photo p. 12: © David Finlayson

Photos p. 16-17, 21, 26-27: © Chris Lee

Graphic design: Dacapo Records

More information about cover art is available at MOMA.org: www.moma.org/collection/works/79007

Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes, www.boosey.com.

Programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs** in partnership with the City Council, the **National Endowment for the Arts**, and the **New York State Council on the Arts** with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

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Robert Motherwell (1915-1991). *Elegy to the Spanish Republic, 108*. 1965-67.
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