



MARTIN SCHLUMPF  
**STREAMS**

**n.** Navona  
Records

FINE MUSIC

## MOUVEMENTS

*Mouvements* for piano and orchestra was composed in 1994 with financial assistance from the “Aargauer Kuratorium,” Aargau canton, Switzerland. It was submitted to the competition for the final piece of the Queen Elizabeth Piano Competition in Belgium.

Not knowing the exact conditions of this fabled piano competition, I decided to write a piano concerto that satisfied competition’s “extrinsic” conditions: roughly 15 minutes long and scored for 3 flutes, 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 3 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, 5 percussionists (!), harp, and strings.

The piece was ignored at the competition. After hearing recordings of earlier competitions, I realized that the concept behind my concerto didn’t stand a chance. The Queen Elisabeth Competition only wants highly virtuoso pieces that focus squarely on the solo instrument. This is not the case in my piece. On the contrary: it seeks to display a wide range of alternative combinations between piano and orchestra. Sometimes the soloist leads, at other times he accompanies, and at still others the partners enter a dialogue ...

The mainspring of the entire piece is the idea of motion—rhythm—hence the title *Mouvements*. It is dominated by four contrasting types of motion laid out in four distinct sections played without a break:

- Part A, a long and large-scale passage distantly reminiscent of Maurice Ravel’s *Bolero*. A fairly long rhythmic pattern enters in the marimba, very soft and “thin,” as a non-duple ostinato. It constantly grows in volume, changes its harmonic surroundings, and leads with increasing density to a rich, extroverted climax.
- Part B forms a sharp contrast: an underlying mood of delicate lyricism, with a piano part sometimes recalling a jazz song, spiced with quasi-impressionistic figures. A percussion transition leads to
- Part C, a playful and sometimes witty conversation between different orchestral groups and the solo piano. The speakers gradually begin to interrupt each other—time for a brief but very agile solo cadenza, leading with a few strokes on the bass drum to the final section D:
- A flowing superimposed passage (solo piano as an orchestral color) in which figures derived from the opening ostinato are contrasted,

periodically tinged at long intervals by brass chords and gong strokes. Toward the end the even flow begins to dissolve, and the soloist is given the final lyrical word in a brief epilogue...

*Mouvements* was openly rehearsed and performed from March 22–27, 1996 by the Aargau Symphony Orchestra, Baden (Switzerland), at a workshop for school classes. Drawing on these experiences, I revised the work in August and September 1999, clarifying some details in the orchestration, but mainly reworking and expanding the solo part. This final version received its premiere at the Zurich Tonhalle on October 28, 1999.

## **WAVES**

In *Waves*, the concert hall is used as an additional creative vehicle. The soloist and the string orchestra play on the concert platform, as tradition requires, but are offset by a trumpeter in the rear of the auditorium who intervenes at key junctures of the music, forming a sort of temporary counterpart to the solo cellist.

The entire piece is, one might say, encapsulated in an electronic layer that frequently emerges in waves and spreads in a precisely calculated manner throughout the entire space demarcated by a number of loudspeakers. This electronic layer is coordinated with the live instrumentalist by means of a click track (an audible metronome) conveyed to the conductor by headphones. This makes it possible to precisely control the polymeters, producing a type of counterpoint in which contrasting and independent levels of tempo run in precise ratios to each other.

The electronic part of the score was produced in my studio in Würenlingen with the aid of sound expanders and virtual samplers controlled by computer and edited in special programs. Its spatial distribution was made possible by a research project conducted by a group of my colleagues at the Hochschule for Music and Theater in Zurich: the so-called “ambisonics procedure.”

*Waves* presents an imaginary theater with various protagonists who enter into conversation with each other from various positions and universes, fall asunder, form subgroups, vanish and resurface...until the most important unite at the end in a brief ritualistic celebration.

## STREAMS

*Streams* stands out in my catalogue of works in two ways. The first is its genre: it marks the first time that I wrote a double concerto. The second involves the choice of solo instruments: the clarinet and bass trombone form an exquisite but extremely rare instrumental combination.

The reason why I chose this combination of instruments is that I wrote the concerto for my two friends, Matthias Müller and David Taylor. Matthias and Dave met each other in New York during the latter part of 2009, after which Matthias wrote excitedly to me about their meeting. This prompted me to discard my original plan for a “normal” clarinet concerto in favor of one for the present two instruments. More than that, I had already met Dave as early as 1987 when we toured with the international improvisation band Cadavre Exquis.

Writing pieces of music for my professional friends is surely the standard case in my output. Here my friendship with Matthias Müller plays a special role. Ever since Matthias started teaching at Zurich University of the Arts

in the late 1990s, I have written a large number of works for him, including *Cumuli III*, *Rattaplasma 2*, *Atemspuren*, and *pulsar\_1*. Matthias also took part in the major world première of my *Trio* for clarinet, cello, and piano.

Writing music for friends also means giving them an opportunity to display their defining qualities and strengths in a special light. *In Streams*, this prompted me to insert a structured improvisation for both soloists in the middle of the piece (Parts D and E). There are perils to such an enterprise, of course. For one thing, there is no way of knowing exactly what the soloist will play at any given moment. For another, the improvised section must not differ too greatly in impetus from the through-composed sections lest the piece fall apart structurally.

I countered the first danger by defining the rough course of the improvisation with judicious verbal directions. Moreover, in key passages, specific entrances after rests are precisely defined. The second danger is offset in the orchestra by a style of notation which is often imprecise in rhythm and meter, and which makes certain interventions by the orchestral instruments

dependent on events in the improvisations or defines them globally within a given temporal unit. In this case the conductor, rather than beating time, merely marks the boundaries of the units. There are also entire passages of precisely through-composed music, thereby lending a rich and many-sided appearance to the whole five-minute section of improvisation.

But it is wrong to speak only of the dangers that may occur in a piece with improvisation. The composer's actual motive for employing improvisation is, of course, the extraordinary fascination of creating a space in which the improvising musicians can react spontaneously and with great license to their musical surroundings. The result, when it comes off, is something that can never possibly occur in through-composed music!

Finally, the end of the improvised section (beginning of Part F) marks one of the most striking passages in the form of the entire work. After intensive trills and madcap figuration in the altissimo registers, the music collapses into the bottom registers while retaining its loud dynamic level. At the same time as the extreme change of register there is a sharp shift in density of

movement, from extremely agile to tensely sustained. This radical shift symbolizes my aim of taking my music to the limits of the expressible.

In contrast, the fractured quality stands out as an isolated instance. All the other distinct caesuras, such as the opening of the improvisation (beginning of Part D) and the opening of the coda with the *Doppelgänger* music (beginning of Part G), are organically directed toward a goal. Even the fabric of the other sections is largely "flowing" and in a state of developmental variation.

One of my characteristic resources for obtaining this variability within a continuum is my technique of tempo leaps, known elsewhere as metrical modulation. This technique is particularly in evidence in Part F. In ten stages the opening tempo is accelerated or decelerated again and again in accordance with simple integral ratios. Assuming that the tempo changes at a ratio of 3:2, this means that the tempo of an eighth-note triplet in the first section is equal to that of an eighth note in the next. In other words, the meter or the beat has accelerated at a ratio of 3:2 while an important group of rhythmic values remains at the same tempo. This makes it possible to achieve fluent transitions. But quite apart from these technical explanations, the technique

can easily be followed with the unaided ear: if you listen carefully, you will suddenly sense that the music is being “counted” in a different way. If you were to dance to it, you would feel you had to quicken your steps, but without being able to say exactly where the transition took place.

Finally, the design of the concluding Part G deserves special mention. It is a sort of drawn-out coda that relates in a very idiosyncratic way to the music of Schubert’s *Der Doppelgänger* from his final song cycle, *Schwanengesang*. The introductory physical booklet text already points out the special role that this song plays in Daves’s public performances and my teaching activities. Here this form of “quotation” will be briefly placed in the context of my music. Quotations already occur in my early works: *Ostinato II* of 1982 uses fragments from Mahler symphonies, and *Winter Circle* of 1991 (reworked into *Summer Circle* in 2007) employs various quotations from Ives, Eisler, Beethoven, and others. Until then all these quotations were literal and largely programmatic in character. Later the function of the quotations began to change: the originals were recast in many ways, and the music, one might say, began to orbit the original without necessarily making it recognizable. So

it is in *Streams*. Nowhere is the music identical to the song, but it comes very close to it in many passages. In this way a sort of underlying gesture from Schubert’s original is woven into my musical language. We sense the pain, a sorrowful hopelessness and despondency. Once again a quite special role attaches to the bass trombone—the “singer” of the song, and the instrument capable of probing the nethermost depths.

But the piece is not over yet. My “sonic universe” is not the same as Schubert’s.



**Martin Schlumpf** (b. 1947) was born in the Swiss town of Aarau, where he was raised and educated through his high school graduation in 1966. During these years, he played double bass in various jazz groups, along with studying classical cello. Schlumpf also began writing essays on composition during this time, beginning with his discovery of the music of Austrian composer Anton Webern.

In 1968, Schlumpf moved to Zurich to study clarinet, piano, conducting, theory and composition. He received a teaching certificate in piano with Warren Thew in 1971, and completed his degree in music theory with Rudolf Kelterborn in 1972. Further studies in composition took him to Boris Blacher in Berlin in 1974. Since 1977 Schlumpf has been professor of music theory at the Zurich University of the Arts, where he has also taught group improvisation since 1991.

Until 1980, Schlumpf was mainly active as a composer of contemporary art music, winning awards at the Zurich Competition (first prize, 1972 and 1979) and the Tonhalle Competition (1975), among others. Beginning in 1980 he returned to improvised music and started playing in a number of his own groups—at first as a bass player in Trio 80, then as a bass clarinetist in his eleven-piece band Swiss Fusion 84, as well as the sextet Die Vögel, and especially Bermuda Viereck. Schlumpf has also taken part in other projects, including John Tchicai and Cadavre Exquis Orchestras, film and theater music projects, and cabarets.

Since the late 1980s, Schlumpf has been widely active in the borderlands between improvisation and composition. He has placed increasing emphasis on his work as a composer in a new post-modern style. Beginning in 1999, Schlumpf's interests increasingly incorporated the computer in his compositions with the aim of obtaining a larger range of timbres and complex polymetrical structures.

In 2012 Martin Schlumpf released **SUMMER CIRCLE** on Navona Records.

For more information on Schlumpf and his music visit [www.martinschlumpf.ch](http://www.martinschlumpf.ch)



Czech pianist **Martin Levický's** (b. 1986) career began at age 12, when he made his debut with the Prague Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Gaetano Delogu at the Spanish Hall of Prague Castle. Since then, he has won several national and international piano competitions. Most recently, he received the first prize at Johann Nepomuk Hummel International Piano Competition in Bratislava.

Throughout his career, Levický has appeared as a soloist with numerous orchestras throughout Europe and has worked with conductors of world renown. He has also appeared on concerto stages in Asia and the United States.

Levický's first teachers were Milse Karova and Jiri Toman. He continued his studies at the Prague Academy of Performing Arts with Peter Toperczer, and after his death with Prof. Boris Krajny. He has also worked with Matti Raekalio, Dmitrij Bashkirov, Mikhail Voskressensky, Vitalij Margulis, Boris Berman, Jaques Rouvier, and Claudio Martinez-Mehrer.

Levický has been featured on many Navona releases.

For more information on Levický and his music, visit [www.levicky.cz/index\\_en.php](http://www.levicky.cz/index_en.php)



**Petr Nouzovský** is one of the foremost cellists of his generation. After studies in Prague, Dresden and Madrid, he improved his artistry in master classes with Boris Pergamenschikov, David Geringas, and Mstislav Rostropovich.

As a soloist he has performed all over the world – in Moscow in Rachmaninoff Hall and the Moscow International Performing Arts Center, in St. Petersburg in Glinka Hall, in Buenos Aires at Teatro Coliseo, and in Istanbul and Los Angeles to name just a few.

Nouzovsky's solo debut was at the Prague Spring Festival in 2005, and he has been invited back nearly every year since. He made his debut in Amsterdam's Concertgebouw in 2008, at Pau Casals Festival in 2010, at Santander Festival in 2011 and at Kasseler Musiktage in 2011. His

busy concert schedule includes some 150 appearances each year. He is featured on 15 recordings, including several available on Navona Records.

His instrument is a Jean Baptiste Vuillaume cello from 1835.

For more information on Nouzovský and his music, visit [www.czechcellist.com](http://www.czechcellist.com)



Clarinetist **Matthias Müller** serves a varied career as international soloist, producer, and Professor at the Zurich University of the Arts in Switzerland. Müller is also a composer of varied genres, including chamber music, music theatre, electronic music and orchestra. He has published a method for clarinet called claritop, and is recognized throughout the world as a pedagogue of the instrument. He is the founder and president of the European Clarinet Association and Artistic Director of “ensemble zero.” At the Institute for Computer Music and Sound Technology at the Zurich University of the Arts, he is in charge of the research

project “Sensor Augmented Bass Clarinet,” an instrument that is playable in the usual way, but also allows the performer to control external electronic devices. Müller lives with his wife, the flutist Magda Schwerzmann, and his three children on the Forch near Zurich, Switzerland.

For more information on Müller and his music visit [www.matthias-mueller.ch](http://www.matthias-mueller.ch)



Bass trombone player **David Taylor** holds a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science degree from the Julliard School of Music and began his career with Leopold Stokowski’s American Symphony Orchestra. He records solo albums, presents numerous recitals throughout the world and has performed on numerous Grammy® Award-winning albums.

Taylor has won the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences Most Valuable Player award for five consecutive years, as the

NARAS Most Valuable Player Virtuoso Award. He currently teaches at Manhattan School of Music and Mannes College and is an artist clinician for Edwards Trombones.

For more information on Taylor and his music visit [www.davetaylor.net](http://www.davetaylor.net)

The **Moravian Philharmonic**, based in Olomouc, Czech Republic, is the oldest Philharmonic in the region of Moravia. It was founded immediately after the liberation of Olomouc in 1945 and quickly established its fine reputation. For over a half century it has occupied the central concert position in its home city and region, as well as having organized the annual Olomouc Spring Musical Festival and the International Organ Festival. During the nearly 50 years of its existence it has covered an extremely wide repertoire that concludes all large orchestral and vocal compositions of all stylistic periods. The orchestra has performed in most European countries and at festivals in Greece, Spain, Italy and Austria. They have premiered over 250 new works and recorded many albums of newly composed music from around the world, including many releases available on Navona Records.

The **PARMA Orchestra** was created as an outlet for exciting and challenging contemporary music by the audio production house PARMA Recordings. The PARMA Orchestra focuses on performing under-represented composers' works from the studio to the concert stage. Based in New England, the orchestra is comprised of principal players from many renowned ensembles including the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Philharmonic, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and the American Composers Orchestra. Led by the accomplished baton of conductor and artistic director John Page, the PARMA Orchestra continues to promote and perform innovative contemporary music from composers the world over.



## **PARMA Orchestra** | John Page, conductor

Gabriela Diaz, Heidi Brauen-Hill, Sarita Uranovsky, Yumi Okada, violins; Peter Sulski, Abigail Cross, violas; Rafael Popper-Keiser, Leo Eguchi, cellos; Anthony D'Amico, bass; Lisa Hennessey, flute; Jennifer Slowick, oboe; Philipp Staedlin, alto saxophone; Margaret Phillips, bassoon; Whitacre Hill, horn; Terry Everson, trumpet; Robert Schulz, percussion; Karolina Rojahn, piano

Andy Happel, David Taylor, John Page, Martin Schlumpf, Matthias Müller

## CONCERTOS OF MARTIN SCHLUMPF

### **MOUVEMENTS** for piano and orchestra (1994/99)

Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra | Vít Mická, conductor  
Martin Levický, piano

1	PART A	5:21
2	PART B	4:39
3	PART C	4:45
4	PART D	3:34

### **WAVES** for solo cello, trumpet obligato, string orchestra and computer (2002)

Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra | Petr Vronský, conductor  
Petr Nouzovský, cello; Marek Vajo, trumpet

5	PART A	2:37
6	PART B	2:00
7	PART C	2:36
8	PART D	2:35
9	PART E	2:44

### **STREAMS** for clarinet, bass trombone and 17 instruments (2010)

PARMA Orchestra | John Page, conductor  
Matthias Müller, clarinet; David Taylor, bass trombone

10	PART A	3:39
11	PART B	2:11
12	PART C	2:43
13	PART D	2:24
14	PART E	2:48
15	PART F	2:50
16	PART G	3:15

**Tracks 1–4** recorded November 25, 2009 and January 15, 2010  
at Reduta Hall in Olomouc, Czech Republic

**Session Producer** Vít Mužík

**Session Engineer** Zdeněk Slavotínek

**Tracks 5–9** recorded November 27, 2009 and January 29, 2010  
at Reduta Hall in Olomouc, Czech Republic

**Session Producer** Vít Mužík

**Session Engineer** Zdeněk Slavotínek

**Tracks 10–16** recorded June 2-3, 2011  
at Futura Productions in Roslindale MA

**Session Producer** Andy Happel

**Session Engineer** John Weston

**Mouvements** commissioned by the “Aargauer Kuratorium,”  
Aargau canton, Switzerland

**Waves** composed for Thomas Demenga and the Zurich Chamber  
Orchestra, commissioned by Expo.02 for the Swiss Regional Exhi-  
bition

**Streams** is dedicated to Matthias Müller and David Taylor

With financial support of the “Aargauer  
Kuratorium,” Aargau canton, Switzerland



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**Assistant Producer** Renée Dupuis  
**Product Manager** Jeff LeRoy  
**Editing & Mixing** Shaun Michaud, Andy Happel  
**Mastering** Andy Happel  
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