



AMERICAN CLASSICS



David
GOMPPER

Double Concerto 'Dialogue'

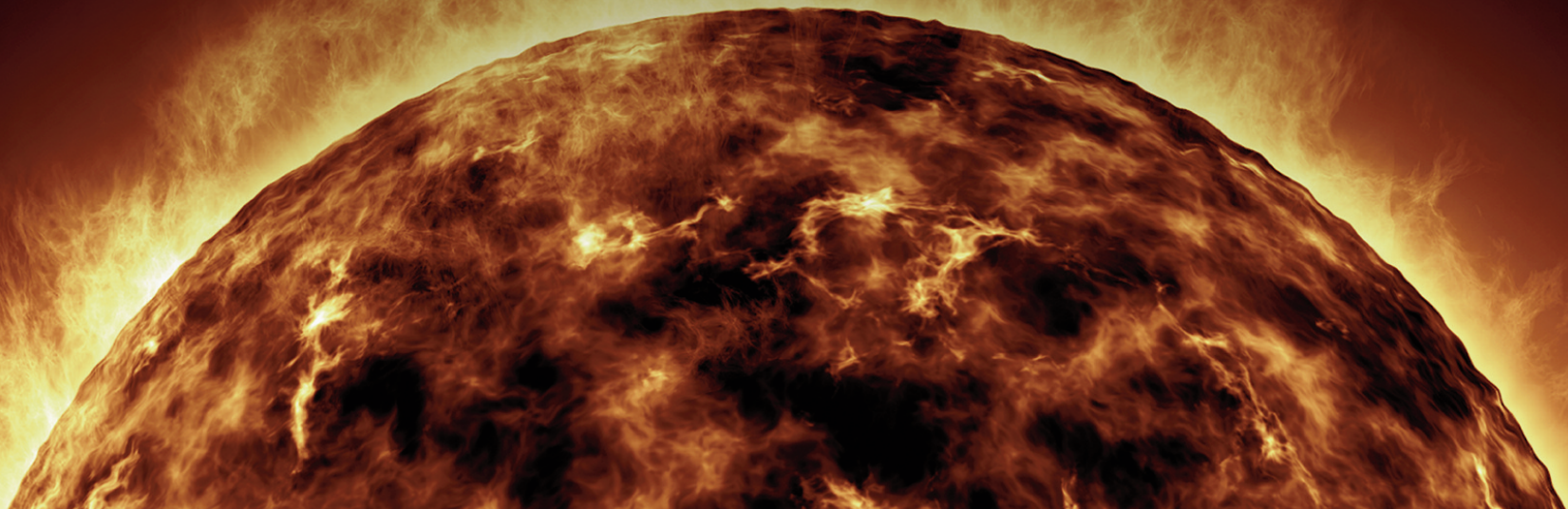
Clarinet Concerto • Sunburst

Wolfgang David, Violin • Timothy Gill, Cello

Michael Norsworthy, Clarinet

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Emmanuel Siffert



David Gompper (b. 1954)

Double Concerto “Dialogue” • Clarinet Concerto • Sunburst

The three compositions found on this album reflect my recent interest in the concerto idea, that is to say the role of a soloist(s) matched against an ensemble. All three works are single-movement casts revealing distinct formal contrasting sections: five in the *Double Concerto* within a frame, and three in both the *Clarinet Concerto* and *Sunburst*.

My compositional approach has also evolved through the exploration of a greater degree of complexity in both time and space, textural landscape and narrative detail. I begin by creating short motivic cells that dissipate into gestural flight, or that recombine into longer and directional phrases. I have also been attentive to formal pacing – what is heard, when, and for how long – and the relationship between content and its inherent durative properties. I believe event-timing is one of the most demanding issues for all composers, one that is typically fraught with miscalculation.

In the end, of course, musical composition is successful only when the imagination takes over and the intuitive spirit is in full control, acting as the final arbiter and judge. The composer is obliged to strike a truce between the analytical and the expressive in search of this balance. Ultimately, however, a composition succeeds only when it evokes the imagination of the listener, who then takes up the journey with the composer at their side.

Double Concerto “Dialogue”
for violin, cello and orchestra (2012–16)

Stylistically, the *Double Concerto* – subtitled “*Dialogue*” that reflects its conversational nature – covers a wide variety of moods: from lyrical singing to contentious arguments; from inconsequential chatter to moments of deeper reflection. Most important is the gradual awareness of “the other” through the development of distinctive voices. What at first is heard undifferentiated and seemingly identical ends up being distinctive, divergent and idiomatic. In the opening bars, the cello

plays in such a high register that one might wonder which instrument is actually being heard. In that short exposition, the cello initiates a descending melodic idea that is completed by the violin, which in turn elaborates and colors the cello’s line in the attempt to engage in dialogue. The role of the orchestra is as a resonator and amplifier, revealing discreet sounds and murmurings “thought” to be heard by the soloists. By the cadenza some 20 minutes later, the lines have returned to a seamless and unified collaboration, soulmates finishing each other’s sentences and speaking as one. Framed by an introduction and coda, the four principle episodes develop various musical ideas suggested in those opening moments. As has been typical of my other more recent works, this piece underwent three expansionary transformations, from an original nine-minute version penned at the Copland House over the winter break in 2011, lengthened to 18 minutes at the Banff Center in 2013, to the final 28-minute version some three years later. This composition was written for Wolfgang David, Timothy Gill, and dedicated to William LaRue Jones and the University of Iowa Symphony Orchestra.

Clarinet Concerto (2013–14)

The *Clarinet Concerto*, an orchestrated expansion of *Traceur* for clarinet and piano, as well as *Sunburst*, are both based on sketches that were generated at the MacDowell Artist Colony in New Hampshire in December and January of 2013–14, ideas from the descending order of fractions (1/2, 1/3, 1/4, 1/5, etc.) that create symmetrical properties (the Farey series). While this trench work served as a somewhat obtuse structural foundation for both works, the surface and expression of the music in the *Clarinet Concerto* is very much related to the experience – all imagined – of the art of Parkour, and the person known as a “traceur,” who as a skilled runner and jumper often performs acrobatic feats of flight (always choreographed). Here we find the person trying to run as

fast as possible into (but not around) rails and obstacles with minimal energy and without slowing down. In a single movement with three separate sections representing fast, slow-cadenzas, fast, the composition was made possible by a grant from the Fromm Music Foundation. It is dedicated to Michael Norsworthy who premiered the work with the University of Iowa Center for New Music Ensemble.

Sunburst (2015)

Sunburst is more directly associated with the proportional Farey series as plotted on a lattice, also known as a Sunburst. This star-shaped formation led to the formal and expressive character of the three-part work – that of a series of explosive colors and active textures as if heard in an echo chamber, leading to a meditative and steady “implosion” of the main harmonic and melodic ideas revealing a solo voice heard in the cello. The work ends with the return of the opening material: morphed, truncated, and extended – possibly suggestive of the “reach” of solar flares into the void. Initially a six-minute version commissioned by and dedicated to the Quad

Cities Symphony Orchestra and their 100th anniversary in 2015, shortly thereafter I expanded it to double its original length. *Sunburst* is the first of a collection of three works for orchestra – *Sunburst*, *Moonburst*, and *Starburst*.

David Gompper

Acknowledgements

This recording was made possible with financial underwriting from the University of Iowa through grants from the Office of Research and Economic Development, as well as from the School of Music, David Gier, director. I wish to thank my collaborators Wolfgang David and Timothy Gill for their patient feedback in helping to shape the final version of the *Double Concerto*; to Michael Norsworthy for the many enjoyable hours on both *Traceur* and the *Clarinet Concerto*; to Carson Cooman and Ketty Nez for their detailed advice on form and orchestration; and to my friend and mentor, Glenn Watkins, for not only his valuable editorial guidance but also his encouragement and steadfast support of my music.

Wolfgang David



The Austrian-born violinist, Wolfgang David, has performed as both a recitalist and as a guest soloist with many leading orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra, the Berne Symphony Orchestra and New York Virtuosi, among others. He tours regularly throughout Europe, North and South America, as well as Japan, Korea and China. The winner of many competitions and prizes, David has performed in major halls such as the Konzerthaus and Musikverein in Vienna, Carnegie Hall in New York, Wigmore Hall and Cadogan Hall in London, Victoria Hall in Geneva, UNESCO Hall in Paris, the Philharmonie in Cologne, the Bolshoi Hall in Moscow and at Bunka Kaikan in Tokyo. Wolfgang David performs on a violin built by Carlo Bergonzi, Cremona after 1724, on exclusive loan to him from the Austrian National Bank. Gompper has composed over ten major works including a *Violin Concerto* for Wolfgang David, whose Naxos recording with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (8.559637) received wide critical acclaim.

www.wolfgangdavid.com

Timothy Gill



Timothy Gill studied in Paris, Cambridge University and the Royal Academy in London. In 1990 he won critical acclaim for his performances in the Park Lane Group series at London's Southbank and has since enjoyed a lifelong commitment to contemporary music. He is principal cellist in the London Sinfonietta, with whom he has appeared as soloist throughout the world, most recently at the MiTo international festival in Turin and at the BBC Proms. Last year he gave a recital of solo contemporary music as part of the Cello Unwrapped series at London's Kings Place. In addition, Gill has appeared as principal cellist with all the London orchestras. He held the post of principal cellist with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) for 15 years, touring the world and appearing frequently with them as a concerto soloist. He also enjoyed a shorter tenure as principal with English National Opera. In 2016 Gill left the RPO in order to focus more fully on his solo career.

Michael Norsworthy



Michael Norsworthy's unique voice on the clarinet has made him a sought-after soloist and chamber music collaborator, and garnered praise from around the globe for his virtuosic and expressive performances. As a celebrated champion of modern repertoire, he has premiered over 150 works by composers including Milton Babbitt, Harrison Birtwistle, Elliott Carter, Brian Ferneyhough, Michael Finnissy, David Gompfer, Helmut Lachenmann, Magnus Lindberg, Tristan Murail, and Wolfgang Rihm, among others, in leading venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Musikverein in Vienna, Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, and at the Casals Festival, and the Aspen Music Festival. His discography can be found on the Albany, BMOP/sound, Cantaloupe, Cirrus, ECM, Gasparo, Mode, Navona, New World, and New Focus labels. He is principal clarinet with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, professor of clarinet and head of the woodwind department at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee. Norsworthy is an artistic advisor for Henri Selmer Paris and an artist clinician for Vandoren SAS and plays on Selmer Paris clarinets and Vandoren products. www.michaelnorsworthy.com

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Leader: Duncan Riddell

Photo: Chris Christodoulou



For more than seven decades the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) has been at the forefront of music making in the UK. The Orchestra's regular performances at its London home, Cadogan Hall, are complemented by a distinguished series at the Royal Festival Hall, a hugely popular series at the Royal Albert Hall, frequent visits to its seven principal regional residencies across the UK, together with the work of its award-winning community and education department, RPO Resound. Alongside its concert series and busy international touring schedule, the RPO embraces 21st-century opportunities, including recordings with pop stars and on film and television soundtracks, while its artistic priority remains paramount: the making of great music at the highest level for the widest possible audience. This would have been lauded by its founder and first conductor, Sir Thomas Beecham, who set up the RPO in 1946, leading a vital revival in the UK's orchestral life after World War II. As the RPO proudly looks to its future, its versatility and high standards mark it out as one of today's most open-minded, forward-thinking symphony orchestras. Registered Charity No. 244533 www.rpo.co.uk

Emmanuel Siffert



Swiss conductor Emmanuel Siffert is the principal conductor of the San Juan Symphony Orchestra in Argentina, and he is involved with many cultural institutions in Buenos Aires including the Teatro Colón for twelve ballets, and the ISA Instituto Superior de Arte del Teatro Colón for coaching. He was the principal conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ecuador, the European Chamber Opera, London, and the Orchestra Sinfonica Aosta, Italy. He studied violin in Salzburg under Sandor Végh and conducting under Horst Stein, Ralf Weikert, Jorma Panula and Carlo Maria Giulini. He collaborated with English National Ballet and the Royal Ballet Covent Garden with further appearances at Opera Lima, Nürnberg Opera, and Moldavian Opera. As an orchestral conductor, he has appeared with the Philharmonia

Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the China National Symphony Orchestra and the London Mozart Players, among others. He is a guest teacher for conducting at the Royal College of Music in London, as well as at the China National Conservatory in Beijing. He is also the author of the Online Conducting method: www.approachtconducting.com.

www.emmanuelsiffert.com

David Gompper



David Gompper (b. 1954) has lived and worked professionally as a pianist, a conductor, and a composer in New York, San Diego, London, Nigeria, Michigan, Texas and Iowa. He studied at the Royal College of Music in London with Jeremy Dale Roberts and Humphrey Searle. After teaching in Nigeria, he received his doctorate at the University of Michigan and taught at the University of Texas, Arlington. Since 1991, he has been Professor of Composition and Director of the Center for New Music at the University of Iowa. In 2002–03 Gompper was in Russia as a Fulbright Scholar, teaching, performing and conducting at the Moscow Conservatory. In 2009 he received an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in New York City, and a Fromm Commission in 2013.

Gompper's compositions have been performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and Merkin Halls (New York), Wigmore Hall (London), the Konzerthaus (Vienna) and the Bolshoi and Rachmaninov Halls (Moscow Conservatory). His compositions have been released on 17 albums, including his *Violin Concerto* with Wolfgang David and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra on Naxos (8.559637). As a pianist, he continues to collaborate with instrumentalists and singers, including Wolfgang David (violin), Stephen Swanson and John Muriello (baritones), Michael Norsworthy (clarinet), Christine Rutledge (viola), Timothy Gill (cello) and Volkan Orhon (double bass).

David
GOMPPER
(b. 1954)

Double Concerto 'Dialogue'
for violin, cello and orchestra (2012–16) **27:56**

- 1** Introduction – **2:11**
- 2** Episode I – **1:53**
- 3** Episode II – **5:50**
- 4** Episode III – **5:21**
- 5** Episode IV – **5:09**
- 6** Cadenza – **4:39**
- 7** Coda **2:53**

Clarinet Concerto (2013–14) **21:16**

- 8** Vaulting – **8:48**
- 9** Balancing – **6:19**
- 10** Coursing **6:09**

11 Sunburst (2015) **12:46**

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

Wolfgang David, Violin 1–7

Timothy Gill, Cello 1–7

Michael Norsworthy, Clarinet 8–10

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Emmanuel Siffert

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These world premiere recordings of works by award-winning composer David Gompper reflect his recent interest in the concerto, as well as his evolution of approach through increasing complexity in time and space, textural landscape and narrative detail. The *Double Concerto 'Dialogue'* covers moods from lyrical to argumentative and inconsequential chatter to deeper reflection, while the *Clarinet Concerto* relates to the energy and skill of the Parkour runner. The explosive colors of *Sunburst* are associated with the star-shaped proportions of the Farey numeric series. Gompper's exquisite *Violin Concerto* can be heard on Naxos 8.559637.

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
62:17