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The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence
ESA-PEKKA SALONEN
TO CONDUCT NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC IN
U.S. Premiere—New York Philharmonic Co-Commission of TANSY DAVIES’s Forest: a concerto for four horns
New York Premiere of STRAVINSKY’s Funeral Song
R. STRAUSS’s Also sprach Zarathustra

April 27–29, 2017

The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence Esa-Pekka Salonen will conduct the New York Philharmonic in the U.S. Premiere of Tansy Davies’s Forest: a concerto for four horns — co-commissioned by the Philharmonic with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Warsaw Autumn Festival — featuring Richard Watkins, Katy Woolley, Nigel Black, and Michael Thompson, all in their Philharmonic debuts; the New York Premiere of Stravinsky’s recently rediscovered Funeral Song; and Richard Strauss’s Also sprach Zarathustra. The performances will take place on Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, April 29 at 8:00 p.m.; they will perform the same program at Long Island University’s Tilles Center for the Performing Arts on Friday, April 28 at 8:00 p.m.

The soloists who workshopped Tansy Davies’s Forest with the composer and gave its World Premiere will reprise it in these performances, at the invitation of the previously announced soloists: Philharmonic Principal Horn Philip Myers and Philharmonic hornists R. Allen Spanjer, Leelanee Sterrett, and Howard Wall. The soloists are current and former members of London’s Philharmonia Orchestra, of which Esa-Pekka Salonen is principal conductor and artistic advisor. In its review of the World Premiere, Classical Source wrote that the work “stole the show” and that Ms. Davies “has composed a tension-filled and incident-packed piece that goes beyond the potential showmanship of the title; indeed it is deep and thought-provoking. No praise is too great for the horn-players.” The New York Premiere of Stravinsky’s Funeral Song replaces the previously announced Beethoven’s Leonore Overture No. 2.

The program marks the first time the Philharmonic has performed a work by Tansy Davies. Mr. Salonen initiated the commission upon listening to music by the British composer and learning that, like him, she had studied both the French horn and composition. Forest: a concerto for four horns is dedicated to Mr. Salonen.
“Nature is hugely important in all of my pieces, but particularly so for the concerto for horns,” said Tansy Davies. “I wanted to follow a train of thought that was connected to the horn and its origins in the forest. So for me, walking around the forest was just the obvious thing to do. As a longtime fan of Esa-Pekka Salonen I was absolutely thrilled when he got in contact. I’m very excited about working with the New York Philharmonic and Esa-Pekka Salonen. I feel sure that this, my next big adventure, will be transformative, challenging, and rewarding, in equal measure.”

Stravinsky’s *Funeral Song* was premiered at the 1909 memorial for his teacher Rimsky-Korsakov, shortly after which the score disappeared. It was discovered at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 2015 and had its first performance in more than a century in December 2016, with Valery Gergiev leading the Mariinsky Orchestra in St. Petersburg; more than 30 performances in 17 countries are planned for 2017 and beyond. *The Times* wrote of the U.K. Premiere of *Funeral Song*, in which Esa-Pekka Salonen led London’s Philharmonia Orchestra: “It was exquisitely played here. … At the end, Salonen gently hugged the score, visibly moved.”

**Artists**

Esa-Pekka Salonen — The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence at the New York Philharmonic — is principal conductor and artistic advisor of London’s Philharmonia Orchestra and conductor laureate of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, where he was music director from 1992 until 2009. The 2016–17 season is his first of five as artist-in-association of the Finnish National Opera and Ballet. Mr. Salonen is also artistic director and co-founder of the annual Baltic Sea Festival, now in its 14th year, which invites celebrated artists to promote unity and ecological awareness among the countries around the Baltic Sea. In the 2016–17 season Mr. Salonen conducts the premieres of a piano concerto by Haukur Tómasson, *Forest*: a concerto for four horns by Tansy Davies (and reprises the work in its U.S. Premiere with the New York Philharmonic), and Stravinsky’s newly rediscovered *Funeral Song*, thought to have been lost in the Russian Revolution. With the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Mr. Salonen co-curates the Reykjavík Festival, bringing Iceland’s contemporary music scene together with the orchestra for four days. At Carnegie Hall he conducts three concerts with The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, which he led in Richard Strauss’s *Elektra*, one of the most critically praised productions of The Met’s 2015–16 season. Esa-Pekka Salonen’s compositions combine intricacy and technical virtuosity with playful rhythmic and melodic innovations. Mr. Salonen has expanded the role of New York Philharmonic Composer-in-Residence to fuse performance and curating with composition: in the 2016–17 season the Orchestra gives the New York Premiere of his new Cello Concerto, with Yo-Yo Ma as soloist, and performs it with Mr. Ma on the EUROPE / SPRING 2017 tour; and gives the New York Premiere of Mr. Salonen’s *Wing on Wing*, which was written for the Los Angeles Philharmonic’s inaugural season at the Frank Gehry–designed Walt Disney Concert Hall and includes recordings of Southern California’s plainfin midshipman fish and distorted samples of Mr. Gehry’s voice. The Cello Concerto was given its World Premiere in March 2017 by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Salonen. Mr. Salonen and the Philharmonia continue their groundbreaking experimentation with how to present music with a digital takeover of the Southbank Centre, featuring the first major virtual-reality production from a U.K. symphony orchestra, as well as the Philharmonia’s award-winning *RE-RITE* and (more)
Universe of Sound installations, which have allowed people all over the world to conduct, play, and step inside the orchestra through audio and video projections. Mr. Salonen also drove the development of a much-hailed app for iPad, The Orchestra, which allows the user unprecedented access to the internal workings of eight symphonic works. He also serves as an advisor to the Sync Project, a global initiative to harness the power of music for human health. Esa-Pekka Salonen made his New York Philharmonic debut in December 1986 leading works by Castiglioni, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Nielsen; he most recently conducted the Orchestra in Circle Map, a program celebrating the works of Kaija Saariaho presented by Park Avenue Armory.

Richard Watkins was the Philharmonia Orchestra’s principal horn for 12 years, and is currently a member of the Nash Ensemble and a founding member of London Winds. He has appeared at many of the world’s most prestigious venues in the U.K., Europe, and the U.S., and has worked with conductors including Carlo Maria Giulini, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Leonard Slatkin, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Vasily Petrenko, Andrew Davis, and Mark Elder. Mr. Watkins has a long association with Aldeburgh Music, first performing Britten’s Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings with Peter Pears in 1983. Since then he appears regularly as soloist and recitalist, performing concertos by Colin Matthews and Oliver Knussen, and Britten’s works for solo horn, the Serenade, and Canticles. Mr. Watkins coaches and gives master classes at the Britten–Pears School, recorded Britten’s Serenade with Allan Clayton and Aldeburgh Strings, and directed the inaugural Britten–Pears Brass Week. In recital, he performs with singers including John Mark Ainsley, Ian Bostridge, and Mark Padmore, and with pianists Barry Douglas, Julius Drake, Paul Lewis, Roger Vignoles, and Ian Brown. Mr. Watkins has premiered concertos by Maxwell-Davies, Nigel Osborne, Magnus Lindberg, Dominic Muldowney, Nicola LeFanu, and Colin and David Matthews. Recent premieres include Colin Matthews’s Horn Concerto and trio; horn quintets by James MacMillan, David Matthews, and Mark-Anthony Turnage; and horn trios by Huw Watkins, Alexander Goehr, and Gerald Barry. He has recorded the Mozart, Arnold, Glière, Smyth, and Matthews horn concertos; Mozart’s Sinfonia concertante; and chamber works by Schumann, Schubert, and Poulenc. Recent releases include the Britten Canticles with Mark Padmore (Wigmore Live), Alexander Goehr’s Horn Trio (NMC), Edward Gregson’s Horn Concerto with the BBC Philharmonic (Chandos), and Sea–Eagle, featuring works by British composers composed for Mr. Watkins (NMC). Richard Watkins holds the Dennis Brain Chair of Horn Playing at the Royal Academy of Music, where he is also a Fellow.

Katy Woolley was appointed principal horn of the Philharmonia Orchestra at age 22, having previously been awarded the third horn position while she was still a student. Having first appeared as a soloist with the Philharmonia while still studying at the Royal College of Music, she now enjoys a blossoming solo career, performing works by the likes of Richard Strauss, Mozart, and Britten. Most recently with the Philharmonia in London, she has performed Richard Strauss’s Horn Concerto No. 2 led by Tugan Sokhiev and the Britten Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings with tenor Mark Padmore, led by Vasily Petrenko. Born in Exeter, Katy Woolley began playing horn at age ten and studied with Sue Dent and, later, Simon Rayner of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Ms. Woolley graduated from the Royal College of Music with a first class degree and was awarded the Tagore Gold Medal by HRH The Prince of Wales. She served as principal horn in the European Union Youth Orchestra for two years and undertook (more)
further study at Universität der Künste in Berlin with Christian-Friedrich Dallmann. Katy Woolley is a professor of horn at both the Royal Academy of Music and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance.

**Nigel Black** is principal horn of the Philharmonia Orchestra and head of the brass faculty at London’s Royal College of Music. In 1979, at the age of 19 and after just two years of study at the Royal College of Music, Mr. Black was appointed principal horn of Milan’s Teatro alla Scala. He was subsequently a member the Chamber Orchestra of Europe (of which he was a founding member and first principal horn), Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and London Philharmonic Orchestra before joining the Philharmonia in 1991. In addition to hundreds of recordings with the Philharmonia, his solo recording credits include a recital disc with Vladimir Ashkenazy, *Corno Cantabile* (Octavia Exton Records); Schumann’s *Konzertstück* for Four Horns with the Philharmonia Orchestra (Deutsche Grammophon); and *The London Horn Sound* (Cala Records). Nigel Black has also been in demand as a studio player for more than 30 years and can be heard on numerous albums and hundreds of film scores, including every James Bond film since *GoldenEye*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and the entire *Harry Potter* series.

**Michael Thompson** is internationally acknowledged as one of the world’s leading horn players and as a charismatic and inspirational teacher. As a conductor, he is known as an orchestral trainer and has received acclaim for his work with young musicians. After studies at the Royal Academy of Music, at age 18 he was appointed principal horn with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. Within three years he was offered the principal horn positions of both the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Philharmonia Orchestra; he remained in his Philharmonia post for ten years before leaving to concentrate on his solo and chamber music career. As director, soloist, or conductor, he has performed in Japan, Australia, the U.S., and Europe, including his debut with the Danish Radio Sinfonietta in Copenhagen, Ostgota Winds Symphony in Sweden, and Alabama Symphony Orchestra. He has directed the London Sinfonietta, Bournemouth Sinfonietta, Britten Pears Orchestra, Ulster Youth Orchestra, and the Royal Academy’s Sinfonia and Concert orchestras. He has conducted a number of community orchestras and was principal conductor of the City of Rochester Symphony Orchestra, 2003–08. His discography includes the major solo horn repertoire, period instrument recordings, and CDs with his wind quintet and horn quartet. As a member of the London Sinfonietta he is at the forefront of new music and has given many first performances, including the U.K. Premieres of Ligeti’s *Hamburg* Concerto and Richard Ayres’s *Noncerto*. An active studio musician, he has played on sound tracks including *The Lord of the Rings*, *Harry Potter*, and the James Bond films. His work for Paul McCartney resulted in the composition of *Stately Horn*, which the Michael Thompson Horn Quartet premiered at Royal Albert Hall and Carnegie Hall. Michael Thompson is a Fellow and Aubrey Brain professor of horn at the Royal Academy of Music and gives regular master classes and lectures worldwide. He plays on an instrument made by Paxman of London.

**Repertoire**
For more than a century, it was believed that **Igor Stravinsky**’s (1882–1971) *Funeral Song* was lost. Written for the January 17, 1909, memorial concert honoring his teacher Rimsky-Korsakov, the work disappeared not long after, along with numerous other items Stravinsky left behind (more)
during the Russian Revolution. One of his earliest works — he was only 26 at the time — *Funeral Song* represents the musical link between *Fireworks* and *Scherzo fantastique* and the work that finally established him on the international stage: *The Firebird*. Stravinsky regretted *Funeral Song*’s loss, remembering in *The Chronicle of My Life*, “I can remember the idea at the root of its conception, which was that all the solo instruments of the orchestra filed past the tomb of the master in succession, each laying down its melody as its wreath against a deep background of tremolo murmurings simulating the vibrations of bass voices singing in chorus.” He also suspected it survived: “The orchestral parts must have been preserved in one of the Saint Petersburg orchestral libraries; I wish someone in Leningrad would look for the parts, for I would be curious myself to see what I was composing just before *The Firebird*.” Stravinsky was correct: during a 2015 relocation of stock at the St. Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory, the orchestral parts of *Funeral Song* were discovered uncatalogued in a previously inaccessible part of the archive. *Funeral Music* was reconstructed by musicologist Natalia Braginskaya and the St. Petersburg Conservatory, and it was performed for the first time in 107 years on December 2, 2016, in St. Petersburg by the Mariinsky Orchestra conducted by Valery Gergiev.

**Tansy Davies** (b. 1973) writes that her *Forest: a concerto for four horns* “is an exploration of ideas about the relationship between humankind and nature, and a cry for a re-programming of our attitudes toward other life-forms.” As humans often feel separate from nature, she says, “This piece is about finding a way of listening to the world around us; to a forest imagined in music, to hear what it might have to say about our current predicament as humans in a dramatically changing environment, as climate change becomes more and more apparent.” *Forest* is also a celebration of the power possible through our reconnection with nature: “If we were just able to listen to it better, we might learn a huge amount about it and about ourselves, and in turn become more compassionate beings, toward each other and to the natural world.” Tansy Davies chose horns as the concerto’s solo quartet due to their ancient, mythic roots, and because their sound became synonymous with the countryside, especially through the historical use of the raw, brash, and energetic *cor de chasse* (hunting horns). She writes: “It struck me that this kind of hyper energy, so distinctive of this type of horn, might be exciting to channel into the concerto, and could at once provide a distinction between the soloists and the orchestra.” *Forest: a concerto for four horns* is a New York Philharmonic co-commission with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Warsaw Autumn Festival.

Stanley Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968) immortalized **Richard Strauss’s *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1895–96)**, a work inspired by Friedrich Nietzsche’s 1885 philosophical poem of the same name based on the sixth century BCE Persian prophet Zoroaster. Strauss wrote: “I did not intend to write philosophical music or portray Nietzsche’s work musically. I meant rather to convey in music an idea of the evolution of the human race from its origin, through the various phases of development, religious as well as scientific, up to Nietzsche’s idea of the Superman.” Tone poems draw inspiration from literary or other sources, and Strauss excelled at composing them. (Never someone to be overly modest, he once said: “I want to be able to depict in music a glass of beer so accurately that every listener can tell whether it is a Pilsner or a Kulmbacher!”) Strauss depicts the opening of Nietzsche’s book — as the prophet apostrophizes the sun — with (more)
a majestic rising fanfare of trumpets, full orchestra, and organ that hails the primeval sunrise. Eight more sections follow, including *Of the Back-world Dwellers, Of the Great Longing, Of Joys and Passions,* and the finale, *Night Wanderer’s Song.* Wassily Safonoff conducted the Philharmonic’s first performance of this work in 1908 at Carnegie Hall; Alan Gilbert led the most recent performances, in November 2013.

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Esa-Pekka Salonen is The Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence.

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**Tickets**

Single tickets for this performance start at $39. Tickets for Open Rehearsals are $20. Tickets may be purchased online at nyphil.org or by calling (212) 875-5656, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturday; and noon to 5:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets may also be purchased at the David Geffen Hall Box Office. The Box Office opens at 10:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and at noon on Sunday. On performance evenings, the Box Office closes one-half hour after performance time; other evenings it closes at 6:00 p.m. A limited number of $18 tickets for select concerts may be available through the Internet for students within 10 days of the performance, or in person the day of. Valid identification is required. To determine ticket availability, call the Philharmonic’s Customer Relations Department at (212) 875-5656. (Ticket prices subject to change.)

For press tickets, call Lanore Carr in the New York Philharmonic Communications Department at (212) 875-5714, or email her at carrl@nyphil.org.

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New York Philharmonic

David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center

Thursday, April 27, 2017, 7:30 p.m.
Open Rehearsal — 9:45 a.m.
Saturday, April 29, 2017, 8:00 p.m.

Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor
Richard Watkins*, horn
Katy Woolley*, horn
Nigel Black*, horn
Michael Thompson*, horn

STRAVINSKY
Tansy DAVIES

Funeral Song (New York Premiere)
Forest: a concerto for four horns (U.S. Premiere—
New York Philharmonic Co-Commission
with Philharmonia Orchestra and Warsaw
Autumn Festival)

R. STRAUSS

Also sprach Zarathustra

Tilles Center for the Performing Arts
C.W. Post Campus
Long Island University
Brookville, New York

Friday, April 28, 2017, 8:00 p.m.

Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor
Richard Watkins*, horn
Katy Woolley*, horn
Nigel Black*, horn
Michael Thompson*, horn

STRAVINSKY
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* New York Philharmonic debut

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