

OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL JUNE 10-13, 2010

THOMAS W. MORRIS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

GEORGE BENJAMIN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

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Composer/Conductor George Benjamin debuts as Music Director of 64th Ojai Music Festival, June 10–13, 2010

Ensemble Modern makes first West Coast appearance with works by George Benjamin, Stravinsky, Messiaen, Ligeti, and Frank Zappa

Into the Little Hill, George Benjamin's chamber opera, receives its West Coast premiere

"Ojai's tradition of inviting a different music director for each season guarantees variety and vitality across festivals. What this means for the 2010 Ojai Music Festival is music-making of the highest order; programming that enchants and challenges; and an encounter with one of the most intellectual and infectiously curious musical minds of our age, George Benjamin." Artistic Director Thomas W. Morris

November 11, 2009—Ojai, California -- Ojai Music Festival Artistic Director Thomas W. Morris and 2010 Music Director George Benjamin today announced programming highlights for the upcoming Festival. From June 10 to June 13, 2010, the Ojai Music Festival will explore the works and celebrate musical relationships of its music director, George Benjamin. Marking its West Coast premiere, the Ensemble Modern, a longtime artistic partner of Benjamin's and one of the world's preeminent new music ensembles, will perform four distinct programs during the 2010 Festival.

Each year, the Ojai Music Festival reflects the tastes and personality of its music director. George Benjamin, widely known as one of today's most inventive composers, is also a sought-after conductor, an imaginative programmer, and an acclaimed pianist. Though the upcoming Festival will mark George Benjamin's first collaboration with the Ojai Music Festival, he is steeped in the Ojai tradition through his close relationships with Ojai alumni including Pierre

Boulez, Olivier Messiaen, and Oliver Knussen. Benjamin's 2010 Ojai Music Festival programs venerate these relationships.

The 2010 Ojai Music Festival explores the music of Benjamin's teachers and mentors, Pierre Boulez and Olivier Messiaen; of his students, Steve Potter and Saed Haddad; by his colleague and friend, Oliver Knussen; and music he simply enjoys, from Ligeti to Stravinsky to Henry Purcell to Indian ragas. Highlights of the upcoming Festival include Messiaen's *Vingt regards sur l'enfant Jésus* and *Oiseaux exotiques*, Ligeti's Chamber Concerto, and the West Coast premiere of Benjamin's chamber opera, *Into the Little Hill*. The Frankfurt-based Ensemble Modern will perform four varied concerts—two conducted by Benjamin, one of chamber music and the other including works by Varèse and American icon Frank Zappa. The 2010 Ojai Music Festival welcomes the return of American composer and conductor Brad Lubman and pianist Eric Huebner, and expands Ojai's musical family with first-time appearances, including the Welsh contralto Hilary Summers; the Finnish soprano Anu Komsu; the Bay area viol group, Wildcats Viols; and soloists from the Ensemble Modern: Ueli Wiget, piano, and Dietmar Wiesner, flute. Detailed concert program information is included below, and updated concert and additional event information will be available in February 2010.

64th OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL, June 10–13, 2010

Thomas W. Morris, Artistic Director
George Benjamin, Music Director

Thursday, June 10, 8:00 pm

Members of the Ensemble Modern
George Benjamin, conductor (Schoenberg)
Hilary Summers, mezzo (Potter)

SAED HADDAD: *Le Contredésir*

GEORGE BENJAMIN: *Three Miniatures for violin*

STEVE POTTER: *Paradigms* (excerpts) U.S. PREMIERE

SCHOENBERG: *Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16* (chamber version), arranged by Greissle

STRAUSS: *Emperor Waltzes*, arranged by Schoenberg

Friday, June 11, 8:00 pm

Ensemble Modern

Brad Lubman, conductor

VARÈSE: *Density 21.5*

VARÈSE: *Octandre*

ZAPPA: Selections from *Greggery Peccary*

ZAPPA: Selections from *The Yellow Shark*

Saturday, June 12, 11:00 am

Eric Huebner, piano

MESSIAEN: *Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus*

Saturday, June 12, 8:00 pm

Ensemble Modern

George Benjamin, conductor

Anu Komsı, soprano

Hilary Summers, contralto

STRAVINSKY: *L'Histoire du Soldat Suite*

GEORGE BENJAMIN: *Into the Little Hill* WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sunday, June 13, 11:00 am

Wildcat Viols

Indian raga ensemble, tba

Indian Ragas

Purcell: *Fantazias for viols*

Sunday, June 13, 5:30 pm

Ensemble Modern

George Benjamin, conductor

Anu Komsı, soprano (Knussen)

Ueli Wiget, piano (Messiaen)

Dietmar Wiesner, flute (Boulez)

PIERRE BOULEZ: *Memoriale*

GEORGE BENJAMIN: *Viola, Viola*

OLIVER KNUSSEN: *Songs for Sue*

BENJAMIN: *At First Light*

LIGETI: *Chamber Concerto*

MESSIAEN: *Oiseaux exotiques*

All concerts are held at Libbey Bowl.

George Benjamin is one of the outstanding composers of his generation. Born in 1960, Benjamin started to play the piano at the age of 7, and began composing almost immediately. In 1976, he entered the Paris Conservatoire to study composition with Olivier Messiaen and piano with Yvonne Loriod, after which he worked with Alexander Goehr at King's College, Cambridge. Benjamin's first orchestral work, *Ringed by the Flat Horizon*, was performed at the BBC Proms when he was 20; since then his works have continued to be played across the world. The 2006 Festival d'Automne in Paris premiered his first operatic work, *Into the Little Hill*, a collaboration with playwright Martin Crimp, which has toured widely on both sides of the Atlantic and won a Royal Philharmonic Society Award in 2008. It received its London premiere in a new production at the Royal Opera House in February 2009. His most recent work, *Duet for piano and orchestra*, was the Roche commission for the 2008 Lucerne Festival, where he was composer-in-residence, and was premiered there by Pierre-Laurent Aimard and The Cleveland Orchestra under Franz Welser-Möst.

George Benjamin appears regularly as a conductor with the world's leading ensembles and orchestras, and he has conducted numerous world premieres, including works by Rihm, Chin, Grisey, and Ligeti. He was the founding curator of the South Bank's Meltdown Festival, and was artistic consultant to the BBC's retrospective of 20th century music, *Sounding the Century*. Since 2001 he has been the Henry Purcell Professor of Composition at King's College, London. He is a Chevalier dans l'ordre des Arts et Lettres, a member of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts, and has been awarded honorary fellowships by the Guildhall School, the Royal Academy, and the Royal College of Music. In January 2010 there will be extensive celebrations of Benjamin's music in San Francisco and London, marking his 50th birthday.

Founded in 1980 and based in Frankfurt since 1985, the **Ensemble Modern** (EM) is one of the world's leading ensembles for the performance of new music. Currently, the EM is comprised of 18 soloists from Argentina, Bulgaria, Germany, India, Israel, Japan, Poland, and Switzerland, all of whom provide the ensemble with its rich cultural background.

The Ensemble Modern is recognized for its uniquely collaborative approach to programming and to performance, with all members sharing responsibility for the creation and implementation of projects, including musical theatre, dance and video projects, chamber music, ensemble and orchestral concerts. Touring extensively—with approximately 100 concerts each year—the EM strives to achieve the highest degree of authenticity by working closely with composers. The musicians rehearse an average of 70 new works each year, 20 of which are world premieres. In 2003, the German Federal Cultural Foundation nominated the Ensemble Modern as one of Germany's beacons of contemporary culture.

Ojai Music Festival Artistic Director **Thomas W. Morris** is recognized as one of the most visionary leaders and innovative concert programmers in the music industry. His tenure with the Festival began in 2004, and extends through 2014. As Artistic Director, Morris is responsible for identifying and engaging each Festival music director and, in collaboration with each music director, for curating Festival programming in the fearless tradition for which Ojai has become renowned. In February 2004, Morris retired as executive director of The Cleveland Orchestra, a position he held since 1987. He served in a number of capacities, including general manager of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1969 to 1985, where he had overall responsibility for the Boston Symphony, Boston Pops, Tanglewood, and Symphony Hall. In addition to his Ojai post, Morris is artistic director of the new Spring for Music Festival at New York's Carnegie Hall to debut in May 2011, and is also active as a consultant, teacher, and writer.

Now in its sixth decade, the **Ojai Music Festival** continues its unmatched musical legacy and international reputation for artistic excellence, adventurous programs, and creative artistic camaraderie. Each year, the Festival welcomes a new music director who creates his/her own artistic programming with an emphasis on contemporary music. The 2010 Festival features British composer/conductor George Benjamin. All concerts take place at the outdoor Libbey Bowl, on a site held sacred by the Chumash Indians, where inspiration and creativity still flourish. From its founding in 1947, a healthy spirit of eclecticism and musical daring flourished, and the Ojai Music Festival remains a world champion of contemporary programming that is enchanting and challenging. With the 1954 appointment of Lawrence Morton as artistic director, Ojai embraced an enduring concept whereby the artistic director engages a different music director each year, around whose musical ideas that year's Festival is built. Among the Festival's diverse music directors have been such renowned musical personalities as John Adams, Pierre Boulez, Aaron Copland, Ingolf Dahl, Peter Maxwell Davies, Lukas Foss, John Harbison, Oliver Knussen, Kent Nagano, Igor Stravinsky, Michael Tilson Thomas, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Mitsuko Uchida, Robert Spano, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, David Robertson, and eighth blackbird. Considered a highlight of the summer classical music season, the Ojai Music Festival is a four-day series of concerts, symposia, and auxiliary events set in the idyllic Ojai Valley, known as California's *Shangri-la*.

Tickets and Information

Series tickets are available now from OjaiFestival.org or by calling (805) 646-2094. Single tickets will be available in spring 2010. Directions to Ojai, as well as information about lodging, concierge services for visitors, and other Ojai activities, are also available on the Ojai Web site.

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