

# Violin Phase for Violin and Tape of Four Violins

Stephen Michael Reich (b1936)

David Felberg violin

Steve Reich is one of the main pillars in American Minimalistic music (along with Philip Glass, Terry Riley, and La Monte Young). His tape loops from the 1960s (*It's Gonna Rain* and *Come Out*), showed how music could create its own phasing effect. In the 1980s, Reich began to explore his Jewish roots in works like the Grammy Award-winning *Different Trains* (1988) for string quartet and tape. He also experimented in 12-tone composition, but he preferred the rhythmic aspects of the technique to its melodic ones. His influences include William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti (both at Juilliard) and Luciano Berio and Darius Milhaud (both at Mills College in California). Reich also studied with Hall Overton around the time he completed a BA in philosophy at Cornell University.

Inspired by Riley's *In C*, Reich further explored the phasing technique, attempting to translate it from recorded tape to live performance. *Piano Phase* (1967), written for two pianos (or marimbas - Sunday Chatter will present this version on January 22) consists of a repeated 12-note melodic figure is first presented in unison. One pianist speeds up so that he is one note "out of phase." This continues until the second player has "lapped" the first and they are in unison once again. *Violin Phase* (1967) uses the same principle and can be performed by four violinists or one violinist and tape. Both works were premiered in a series of concerts given in New York City art galleries. Composer John Adams said poetically, "He [Reich] didn't re-invent the wheel so much as he showed us a new way to ride."

J.W. Basilo Poet

## CELEBRATION OF SILENCE

### Violin Sonata No 3 in D Minor Opus 108

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

David Felberg violin | Elias-Axel Pettersson piano

- I Allegro
- II Adagio
- III Un poco presto e con sentimento
- IV Presto agitato

Born in Hamburg, Brahms spent most of his professional life in Vienna as a composer and virtuoso pianist, often premiering his own works. He often worked alongside leading instrumentalists of the time: pianists Franz Liszt, Frederic Chopin, and Clara Schumann; and violinists Joseph Joachim and Eduard Reményi. An uncompromising perfectionist (and feeling in the shadow of Beethoven when it came to composing symphonies), Brahms destroyed many of his works.

The *Third Violin Sonata* (composed between 1878-87 and dedicated to Hans von Bülow) is a testament to Brahms's technical craft and melodic innovation. It was premiered in Budapest in 1888 with Jenő Hubay on violin and the composer at the piano. The first movement's lyrical introductory theme is stated *sotto voce* in the violin with an *agitato*-esque piano accompaniment. After some virtuosic fireworks, the development begins. The recapitulation features an interesting modulation to F# minor before coming back to D Minor and finally resolving to D Major. The second movement is a beautiful cavatina in 3/8 meter. After a unison presentation of the theme, the violin retakes the theme and plays rather rhapsodically before a triumphant return of the original theme. The peculiar third movement is *scherzando* in character and presents a dialogue between violin and piano. After a modulation to F# minor, the theme returns with violin *pizzicati*, leading to a brief, understated ending. The fourth movement is a *tour-de-force* with the first motif introduced in the piano and taken up quickly by the violin. Its 6/8 meter suggests a *tarantella*—the structure is reinforced by contrasting themes: one impassioned and stormy, the other calm and lyrical. A thundering cascade of D minor arpeggios ends the work.

Program notes © Elias-Axel Pettersson, 2011

JANUARY 08 2012

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**SUNDAY CHATTER SUNDAY  
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MUSIC WORTH TALKING ABOUT**

*Today's performance is sponsored by an anonymous donor in celebration, in advance, of another wonderful year of Music, Poetry and Fellowship.*

### REMINDERS

Please silence electronic devices

Please do not use flash photography during the program

In the unlikely event of an emergency, please exit calmly.

There are two exits:

~ at the **front** to the right of the stage (stairs)

~ at the **rear** through the door you entered (ramp)

Complete info and calendars at [www.chatterchamber.org](http://www.chatterchamber.org)

### SUNDAY CHATTER

Sunday, January 15 @ 10:30am

Alvin Curran For Cornelius  
Frederic Chopin Sonata No 3  
Elias-Axel Pettersson piano  
Brian Hendrickson poet

### CHATTER CABARET

Sunday, February 12 @ 5pm

Steve Reich Vermont Counterpoint  
Arvo Pärt Spiegel im Spiegel  
Fritz Kreisler Liebesleid  
Dmitri Shostakovich Piano Trio No 2

### CHATTER 20-21

Friday, March 3 @ 7:30pm

Steve Reich Retrospective  
Clapping Music (1972)  
Different Trains (1988)  
Double Sextet (2007)