

Lincoln Center's

white light festival

October 16–November 16, 2016

Wednesday, November 16, 2016, at 7:30 pm

Medieval to Modern

Jeremy Denk, *Piano*

This program is approximately 80 minutes long and will be performed without intermission.

Please join the artist for a White Light Lounge immediately following the performance.

This performance is also part of the Great Performers Virtuoso Recitals series.

(Program continued)

This performance is made possible in part by the Josie Robertson Fund for Lincoln Center.

Steinway Piano
Alice Tully Hall, Starr Theater
Adrienne Arsht Stage

*Please make certain all your electronic devices
are switched off.*

WhiteLightFestival.org

Support for Great Performers is provided by Rita E. and Gustave M. Hauser, Audrey Love Charitable Foundation, Great Performers Circle, Chairman's Council, and Friends of Lincoln Center.

Join the conversation: #LCWhiteLight

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We would like to remind you that the sound of coughing and rustling paper might distract the performers and your fellow audience members.

In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between pieces. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in the building.

Medieval to Modern

MACHAUT (c. 1300–1377)	<i>Doulz amis, oy mon compleint</i>
BINCHOIS (c. 1400–1460)	<i>Tristre plaisir et douleureuse joie</i>
OCKEGHEM (c. 1410–1497)	<i>Kyrie, from Missa prolationum</i>
DU FAY (c. 1397–1474)	<i>Franc cuer gentil, sur toutes gracieuse</i>
JOSQUIN (c. 1450/55–1521)	<i>Kyrie, from Missa “Pane lingua”</i>
BYRD (c. 1540–1623)	<i>A Voluntarie, from My Ladye Nevells Booke of Virginal Music (1591)</i>
GESUALDO (1566–1613)	<i>O dolce mio tesoro (1611)</i>
MONTEVERDI (1567–1643)	<i>Zefiro torna e di soave accenti, SV 251 (1632)</i>
SCARLATTI (1685–1757)	<i>Sonata in B-flat major, K.545</i>
BACH (1685–1750)	<i>Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor, BWV 903 (before 1723)</i>
MOZART (1756–1791)	<i>Andante, from Sonata No. 5 in G major, K.283 (1775)</i>
BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)	<i>Allegro molto e con brio, from Sonata No. 5 in C minor, Op. 10, No. 1 (1795–97)</i>
SCHUMANN (1810–1856)	<i>In der Nacht, from Fantasiestücke, Op. 12, No. 5 (1837)</i>
CHOPIN (1810–1849)	<i>Prelude in C major, Op. 28, No. 1 (1838–39)</i> <i>Prelude in A minor, Op. 28, No. 2</i>
LISZT (1811–1886)	<i>Isoldes Liebestod, from Tristan und Isolde (1867)</i>
BRAHMS (1833–1897)	<i>Intermezzo in B minor, from Klavierstücke, Op. 119, No. 1 (by 1893)</i>
SCHOENBERG (1874–1951)	<i>Mäßige Viertel, from Drei Klavierstücke, Op. 11, No. 1 (1909)</i>

(Program continued)

DEBUSSY **Reflets dans l'eau, from *Images, series 1* (1901–05)**
(1862–1918)

STRAVINSKY ***Piano-Rag-Music* (1919)**
(1882–1971)

STOCKHAUSEN **Klavierstücke I (1952)**
(1928–2007)

PHILIP GLASS **Etude No. 2 (1994)**
(b. 1937)

LIGETI **Automne à Varsovie, from *Etudes, Book I* (1985)**
(1923–2006)

BINCHOIS ***Tristre plaisir et douloureuse joie***
(c. 1400–1460)

Artist's Note

By Jeremy Denk

It's challenging to write a program note for this recital, in the same way it is to sum up Western musical history in 80 minutes. What I'm after is a story—and not a stunt or a lesson—and my hope is that this note communicates some of the wonder of this centuries-long tale, its many twists and turns, its seeming dead ends and sudden epiphanies.

We start with two threads: troubadors and masses, the secular and the religious. Circling laments by **Guillaume de Machaut** (two voices) and **Gilles Binchois** (three) are followed by the purity and craft of **Jean de Ockeghem**, where two voices in close dialogue seem to explore all the possibilities of the intervals, almost to my ear like children learning an incredibly sophisticated game. Back to the secular with **Guillaume Du Fay**, praising the beauty of a beloved with three playfully intertwined voices, and then again the religious with **Josquin des Prez**—mastery of counterpoint turned to more austere ends. All of this music has a rhythmic fluidity and unpredictability, a sense of constant reinvention that you may feel gets less present as the centuries pass.

The ongoing glories of the Renaissance are represented by **William Byrd**, **Carlo Gesualdo**, and **Claudio Monteverdi**. Byrd's *Voluntarie* is the first keyboard work on the program, a tour de force in which four voices are constantly reacting to each other: a joyfully imitative piece where all the voices come together, vocal interplay mixed with keyboard virtuosity. The two madrigals represent opposite harmonic worlds: Gesualdo extremely chromatic, seemingly keyless, concluding with one last, unexpectedly ravishing slide; Monteverdi set over a single measure of

repeated harmony, an unremitting G major, exploring all the possibilities of the major scale. You have the sense of a new harmonic understanding—the emergence of a language where everything relates to a single center—and at the same time the crystallization of voices into melody and accompaniment.

With the end of the Renaissance, we have arrived in the realm of tonality, as we currently understand it. **Domenico Scarlatti's** wild sonata is like the appearance of virtuosity on the grand stage, along with the seeds of a new structure: sonata form. There is something fateful about the appearance of **Johann Sebastian Bach** at this point, someone who can understand the evolved language of music in its totality, like surveying the whole universe. Bach is an odd choice for a historical hinge, since he was essentially ahistorical—he wrote against fashion, pursuing a contrapuntal and chromatic mastery while the musical world was becoming simpler. But then he lurks over us. He sums up the great imitative tradition of many centuries past, while also setting out the boundaries and possibilities of the tonal language of the century-and-a-half to come.

After Bach, I tried to suggest something of a clean slate. How do you choose a single piece to encapsulate the genius of **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**? I hoped this slow movement might do the trick, which starts with the most basic texture, just a melody and a harmony, and then reveals unexpected emotional depths. **Ludwig van Beethoven** shatters the calm of the Mozart—shatters the politeness of the classical style, turning the same language to more violent, and individual, ends. **Robert Schumann** takes up the restlessness of Beethoven, transmuting it into Romantic fantasy, and this restlessness begins to infect the harmonies themselves. With **Franz Liszt's**

faithful transcription of **Richard Wagner**, we have the epitome of chromaticism (a theme we may recognize from Gesualdo or Bach), dissolving the sense of a center, a magnificent climax that is also, in a way, the end of a long road. **Johannes Brahms's** little *Intermezzo* has the same essence, on a smaller scale but just as deeply felt. It begins with a series of falling thirds, giving a sense that harmony, and even a whole style and tradition, is dissolving. A waltz appears as an emblem of this lost style.

Arnold Schoenberg begins by waltzing, too, but by this time tonality is well and truly gone—we have crossed over into Modernism. The same expressivity is there, without the comforting center.

Claude Debussy presents a quite different face of Modernism, a revolution in sound, and **Igor Stravinsky** yet another—the fragmentation of rhythm, the cubist rethinking of time. In a way that period from 1890 to 1910 feels like another Renaissance or Classical period, with so many geniuses finding new ways to go, but all this brilliant exploration of

fragmentation creates a question: trajectories to where? Following one road, we come to **Karlheinz Stockhausen's** *Klavierstücke I*, with total control of pitch, rhythm, duration, dynamic—extreme music freed from choice. Following another, we arrive at the minimalism of **Philip Glass**, a new and extreme simplicity, seeming to reject all of it (Romanticism, Serialism, what have you). Paired with Glass's *Etude* is **György Ligeti's**—both of them on falling figures, musical symbols of sadness, repeating themselves over and over. And at that moment, when all seems lost, we return to the beginning of the story with **Binchois**.

The aim of this recital is to hear all the centuries of music in a single arc, and to be conscious of a life cycle. Styles die, like we do. It is no longer possible, for instance, to write in the style of Mozart, so this recital is a story of constantly emerging possibility, with impossibility right behind.

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The Sound

By Kabir

The flute of interior time is played whether we hear it or not,
What we mean by “love” is its sound coming in.

When love hits the farthest edge of excess, it reaches a
wisdom.

And the fragrance of that knowledge!

It penetrates our thick bodies,
it goes through walls—

Its network of notes has a structure as if a million suns were
arranged inside.

This tune has truth in it.

Where else have you heard a sound like this?

—Translated by Robert Bly

*For poetry comments and suggestions, please write
to programming@LincolnCenter.org.*

Meet the Artists



MICHAEL WILSON

Jeremy Denk

Jeremy Denk is one of America's foremost pianists. Winner of a MacArthur Fellowship and the Avery Fisher Prize, he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2016. Mr. Denk returns frequently to Carnegie Hall and recently appeared at the BBC Proms with Michael Tilson Thomas, and with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and Cleveland Orchestra, as well as on tour with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields.

His 2016–17 season includes a recital tour of the U.K., including a return to Wigmore Hall, and his debut at the Philharmonie in Cologne. He returns to the National Symphony Orchestra and St. Louis Symphony, and appears on tour with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Denk will release a solo recording, *The Classical Style*, and joins his longtime musical partners, Joshua Bell and Steven Isserlis, in a recording of Brahms. Future projects include a U.S. tour of the Ives Violin Sonatas with Stefan Jackiw, and a new piano concerto commissioned by the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

Mr. Denk served as music director of the 2014 Ojai Music Festival, performing and curating, as well as writing the libretto for *The Classical Style*, a comic opera, which was later presented by Carnegie Hall and the Aspen Music Festival. Mr. Denk is known for his original and insightful writing on music: His writing has appeared in multiple publications, and one of his *New Yorker* contributions, "Every Good Boy Does Fine," forms the basis of a new

memoir. His blog, *Think Denk*, was recently selected for inclusion in the Library of Congress web archives.

Mr. Denk has made several critically acclaimed recordings of Beethoven, Ligeti, and Ives, among many others. His recording of Beethoven's final piano sonata was selected by BBC Radio 3's *Building a Library* as the best available version recorded on modern piano, and his Sony Classical album with Bell, *French Impressions*, won the 2012 Echo Klassik Award. In 2012 Tilson Thomas invited Mr. Denk to appear as soloist in the San Francisco Symphony's American Mavericks festival, and he recorded Henry Cowell's Piano Concerto with the orchestra. Having cultivated relationships with many living composers, he currently has several commissioning projects in progress.

Mr. Denk graduated from Oberlin College, Indiana University, and The Juilliard School.

White Light Festival

I could compare my music to white light, which contains all colors. Only a prism can divide the colors and make them appear; this prism could be the spirit of the listener. —Arvo Pärt. Now in its seventh year, the White Light Festival is Lincoln Center's annual exploration of music and art's power to reveal the many dimensions of our interior lives. International in scope, the multidisciplinary festival offers a broad spectrum of the world's leading instrumentalists, vocalists, ensembles, choreographers, dance companies, and directors complemented by conversations with artists and scholars and post-performance White Light Lounges.

Lincoln Center's Great Performers

Lincoln Center's Great Performers series offers classical and contemporary music performances from the world's outstanding

symphony orchestras, vocalists, chamber ensembles, and recitalists. Since its initiation in 1965, the series has expanded to include significant emerging artists and premieres of groundbreaking productions, with offerings from October through June in Lincoln Center's David Geffen Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and other performance spaces around New York City. Along with lieder recitals, Sunday morning coffee concerts, and films, Great Performers offers a rich spectrum of programming throughout the season.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) serves three primary roles: presenter of artistic programming, national leader

in arts and education and community relations, and manager of the Lincoln Center campus. A presenter of more than 3,000 free and ticketed events, performances, tours, and educational activities annually, LCPA offers 15 programs, series, and festivals including American Songbook, Great Performers, Lincoln Center Festival, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, Midsummer Night Swing, the Mostly Mozart Festival, and the White Light Festival, as well as the Emmy Award-winning *Live From Lincoln Center*, which airs nationally on PBS. As manager of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA provides support and services for the Lincoln Center complex and the 11 resident organizations. In addition, LCPA led a \$1.2 billion campus renovation, completed in October 2012.

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