



***Strange Scenes – The Music of Wolfgang Rihm* Presents
Wolfgang Rihm’s Vocal and Instrumental Chamber Music**

**Featuring the U.S. Premiere of *ET LUX* performed by
Mivos Quartet and Ekmeles Vocal Ensemble**

**Saturday, October 19, 2019 at 7:30pm
The DiMenna Center for Classical Music - Cary Hall
450 West 37th Street | New York, NY**

**Tickets (\$25 general; \$15 student) and information at
www.eventbrite.com**

***Strange Scenes – The Music of Wolfgang Rihm* is generously supported by
the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany**



New York, NY – On **Saturday, October 19, 2019 at 7:30pm**, a collective of New York City-based musicians join forces to perform **Wolfgang Rihm’s Vocal and Instrumental Chamber Music** at **The DiMenna Center for Classical Music in Cary Hall** (450 West 37th Street). This concert is presented as part of ***Strange Scenes – The Music of Wolfgang Rihm***, a festival running September 13 – November 27 designed to provide a multifaceted immersion into Wolfgang Rihm’s musical world. The festival takes its name from Rihm’s piano trio ***Fremde Szenen*** (programmed on this performance) and alludes to the composer’s frequent inspiration by literary fragments.

Mivos Quartet, “one of America’s most daring and ferocious new-music ensembles” (*The Chicago Reader*) and **Ekmeles Vocal Ensemble**, “a brilliant young ensemble defining a fresh and virtuosic American sound” (*The New Yorker*), present the **U.S. Premiere** of ***ET LUX*** (2009), a rarely performed requiem for vocal quartet and string quartet.

Renowned for his prolific outpouring of virtuosic, often hyper-Romantic works, Rihm explores a very different side of his aesthetic voice in ***ET LUX***. The piece is inspired by his memories of singing in choirs as a youth, and reminiscences of melodies from Brahms and Mozart with fragments of text from the requiem mass. A startlingly beautiful tapestry is woven together, with bursts of intense emotion cutting through an otherworldly texture of sustained lines. ***ET LUX*** presents the listener with a requiem radically disintegrated and distilled in a profoundly personal way, while maintaining and even heightening the sense of spiritual poignancy we feel when contemplating mortality.

Rihm is well-known for his great penchant for German literature and poetry. Mezzo-soprano **Sophie Delphis** and pianist **Hannah Harnest** perform two sets of lieder with texts by **E. Mörike** (2009) and **F. Rückert** (2008). Both vocal cycles present poems with rich romantic metaphors and language, and very often speak about the human existence, death, and the meaning of life.

Violinist **Abigel Kralik** and cellist **Julian Schwarz** join Harnest to perform the festival’s eponymous work, ***Fremde Szene II*** (1982-1983). Subtitled “Character Piece,” this is the middle part of a three-movement trio that is very often performed separately for its significance as “declaration of love” of the composer to Robert Schumann. *Szene* or “Scena” was Schumann’s supposed expression of having the project to write a piano trio. Rihm explains, “the word *fremd* (strange or foreign) has a deep romantic core and reminds of the opening phrases of some of the poetry that Schubert set to music. It stands for *the other*, the place of longing, or the place from where you might get an answer from. In this music, I used the mode of speaking of someone else, which I discussed through imitating it in my own unique way.”

About the Artists

Wolfgang Rihm (b. 1952, Karlsruhe, Germany) began studying composition under Eugen Werner Welte in 1968. In 1972-73 he studied with Stockhausen in Cologne, then took composition lessons with Klaus Huber and studied musicology with Hans Heinz Eggebrecht. Rihm has taught summer courses in Darmstadt since 1978. He also taught at the Karlsruhe Musikhochschule and was appointed professor of composition there in 1985. Rihm has become one of the most influential composers of the generation born after the Second World War and was among those who effected a paradigm shift in German musical culture, replacing his predecessors' essentially intellectual and structuralist conception of art with one giving freer rein to emotion, adopting a more flexible approach to structure. To this end, Rihm's music often appeals to the highly expressive sound worlds of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century composers, with Mahler and Bruckner being particular favorites. Rihm's output is extremely large and includes highly influential stage works, as well as orchestral compositions, chamber music, and songs. He was honored with countless awards, including the Ernst von Siemens Music Award (2003), the Golden Lion for lifetime achievement at the Venice Biennial (2010), and the Robert Schumann Prize (2014). In 2010, the New York Philharmonic premiered his violin concerto at Avery Fisher Hall with soloist Anne-Sophie Mutter.

The **Mivos Quartet**, "one of America's most daring and ferocious new-music ensembles" (*The Chicago Reader*), is devoted to performing works of contemporary composers and presenting new music to diverse audiences. Since the quartet's beginnings in 2008 they have performed and closely collaborated with an ever-expanding group of international composers representing multiple aesthetics of contemporary classical composition. They have appeared on prestigious series such as the New York Phil Biennial, Wien Modern (Austria), the Darmstadt Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik (Germany), Asphalt Festival (Germany), Shanghai New Music Week (Shanghai, China), Música de Agora na Bahia (Brazil), Aldeburgh Music (UK), and the Venice Biennale. Mivos is invested in commissioning and premiering new music for string quartet, striving to work closely with composers over extended periods of time. Mivos is also committed to working with guest artists, exploring multi-media projects involving live video and electronics, and performing improvised music. The quartet is the recipient of the 2019 Dwight and Ursula Mamlok Prize for Interpreters of Contemporary Music. The members of Mivos are: violinists Olivia De Prato and Maya Bennardo, violist Victor Lowrie Tafoya, and cellist Tyler J. Borden. www.mivosquartet.com.

Ekmeles is a vocal ensemble dedicated to the performance of new and rarely-heard works, and gems of the historical avant-garde. New York is home to a vibrant instrumental New Music scene, with a relative paucity of vocal music. Ekmeles was founded to fill the gap by presenting new a cappella repertoire for solo voices, and by collaborating with these instrumental ensembles.

Notable collaborations include the World Premiere of Ann Cleare's *Earth Waves* with William Lang, and Nathan Davis' *The Sand Reckoner* with ICE's Jacob Greenberg, the U.S. Premieres of Bernhard Lang's *Fremde Sprachen* and Stefano Gervasoni's *Dir - In Dir* with Carlos Corderio and the Mivos Quartet, Mathias Spahlinger's *über den frühen tod früuleins anna augusta marggräfin zu baden* with members of Tilt Brass and loadbang, Beat Furrer's *FAMA* with Talea Ensemble, and Luigi Nono's *Quando Stanno Morendo* with AMP New Music, and concerts of world premieres by Columbia University and New York University composers. Other performances include the first concert performance of the complete choral works of John Cage on the Avant Music Festival, two nights of Christopher Cerrone's *Invisible Cities* with Red Light New Music, and several appearances at Miller Theatre on their Pop-Up Concert and Composer Portrait series.

Director Jeffrey Gavett brings a hybrid vision to the group: he is an accomplished ensemble singer and performer of new works and holds degrees from Westminster Choir College and Manhattan School of Music's Contemporary Performance Program. He has assembled a virtuoso group of colleagues who bring their own diverse backgrounds to bear on the unique challenges of this essential and neglected repertoire. The members of Ekmeles for this performance are Tim Keeler, countertenor; Tomás Cruz, tenor; Jeffrey Gavett, baritone; Steven Hrycelak, bass. www.ekmeles.com.

German-American pianist **Hannah Harnest** is an extremely versatile artist, who was educated at the Conservatoire Supérieur de Paris and the Royal Academy of Music in London, but who also trained as a journalist at Columbia University New York. She has played extensively as a soloist with orchestras in Germany, Italy, Hungary, and France, collaborating with Maestros such as Marzio Conti and Daniel Grossmann. She has appeared as a chamber musician with the Loewenberg Trio, and as a vocal accompanist at the Philharmonic Hall in Munich, the Wigmore Hall in London, Forchheim Auditorium (Center for Jewish History) and National Sawdust in New York, Harris Concert Hall in Aspen, Colorado, and the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts in Annandale-on-Hudson, amongst others. An invited resident at many international festivals (Encuentro de Santander in Spain, 2016 Britten Pears Young Artist at the Aldeburgh Festival, UK, Aspen Music Festival 2018, and Colburn Foundation Fellow at Songfest Los Angeles 2019), Harnest has been notably influenced by Malcolm Martineau, Roger Vignoles, Menahem Pressler, Michael Dussek, Olivier Gardon, Gordon Fergus-Thompson, and Yonty Solomon, and has been a semi-finalist at international competitions "Das Lied" in Heidelberg, and "Wigmore Hall Song Competition" in London. Her interest in contemporary music has been fueled by the collaboration with Wolfgang Rihm's student Nico Sauer (b. 1986), whom she commissioned to write a piano trio, as well as her work with Dawn Upshaw and Kayo Iwama as part of a two-year

fellowship at Bard College. Harnest recently joined the adjunct faculty of NYU Steinhardt as a private piano teacher and art song coach, as well as NYU's Contemporary Music Ensemble.

Franco-American mezzo-soprano **Sophie Delphis**' operatic roles include: Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Giunone (*La Calisto*), Flora (*La Traviata*), Cenerentola and Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*), Concepción (*L'heure espagnole*), Carmen and Mercedes (*Carmen*), Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), Marla Maples (*The Drumf and the Rhinegold*, premiere), Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Elle (*La voix humaine*), Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Sœur Mathilde (*Dialogues des Carmelites*), Valetto and Virtù (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*) and Lazuli (*L'Étoile*). As a recitalist, she has performed programs for numerous musical and cultural organizations in the United States and China. In addition to traditional repertoire, she enjoys collaborating with composers, improvisers, and theatre artists on new works. Delphis is a soloist on the Grammy-nominated Naxos recording of Milhaud's *Oresteia* trilogy, and on the original English cast recording of Matti Kovler's *Ami and Tami*. www.sophiedelphis.com.

American-Hungarian violinist **Abigel Kralik** won numerous prestigious awards as a student of Eva Acsne Szily in Hungary, including 1st prize at the national Koncz János Competition in 2010. She entered the Liszt Academy of Music's Young Talents Program in 2011. Soon thereafter, she was accepted into the Perlman Music Program in New York. In spring 2012, Kralik won 1st prize at the international competition Talents for Europe in Dolny Kubin, Slovakia. In 2013, she began studying under Kristóf Baráti. She has performed as a soloist with several orchestras throughout the world, most recently with the Anima Musicae Chamber Orchestra. She has performed with acclaimed musicians, such as Vilde Frang, Nicholas Altstaedt and Maxim Rysanov. Her most recent accomplishments include winning 1st prize at the New York International Artists Association, joining the artist roster of Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players, and being invited as an Academy Artist at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland. In the fall of 2018, Kralik made her Carnegie Hall debut as a soloist. She now studies at The Juilliard School as a Master's student under the tutelage of Itzhak Perlman and Laurie Smukler, where she is a recipient of the Kovner Fellowship. www.abigelkralik.com.

Mentored by the great Joel Krosnick, David Tonkonogui, Toby Saks, Lynn Harrell, and Neal Cary, American cellist **Julian Schwarz** has repeatedly been praised for his powerful tone, effortless virtuosity, and extraordinarily large color palate. After making his concerto debut at the age of 11 with the Seattle Symphony and his father Gerard Schwarz on the podium, he made his US touring debut with the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra in 2010. Since then he has led an active career as soloist. A committed chamber musician, Schwarz performs with Canadian pianist Marika Bournaki, is a member of the New York based Frisson Ensemble, the New York Classical Players, the Mile-End Trio with violinist Jeff Multer and Bournaki and makes frequent appearances at Brooklyn's Bargemusic. In 2013, Schwarz won 1st prize in the professional cello division of the Schoenfeld International String Competition in Hong Kong, and in 2016 won 1st prize at the Boulder International Chamber Music Competition's "The Art of Duo" with Bournaki. Schwarz is an ardent supporter of new music and has premiered concertos by Richard Danielpour and Samuel Jones (recorded with the All-Star Orchestra for public television in 2012, subsequently released as a DVD on Naxos). In the 2017-2018 season, he gave the world premiere of Lowell Liebermann's first Cello Concerto with a consortium of five orchestras. Schwarz serves as Assistant Professor of Cello at Shenandoah Conservatory of Shenandoah University (Winchester, VA). Other appointments include faculty teaching assistant to Joel Krosnick at The Juilliard School. www.julianschwarz.com.

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