

present...

DUBLIN GUITAR QUARTET

Brian Bolger
Chien Buggle

Pat Brunnock
Tomas O'Durcain

Friday, November 10, 2023 | 7:30pm

Herbst Theatre

BRYCE DESSNER **Aheym**

PHILIP GLASS **String Quartet No. 2 "Company"**

Piano Etudes No. 2, 9, 16, and 20

INTERMISSION

RACHEL GRIMES **Book of Leaves** (*selected movements*)

MARC MELLITS **Titan** (*selected movements*)

ARVO PÄRT **Summa**

PHILIP GLASS **String Quartet No.3 "Mishima"**

Dublin Guitar Quartet is represented by Middleton Arts Management
98B Long Highway, Little Compton RI 02837 middletonartsmanagement.com

For Tickets and More: sfperformances.org | 415.392.2545



ARTIST PROFILE

Tonight is the SF Performances debut of Dublin Guitar Quartet.

Described as a “quartet with a difference” by the *Irish Times*, **Dublin Guitar Quartet** is the first classical guitar quartet entirely devoted to new music. Since its formation at the Dublin Conservatory of Music and Drama, the DGQ has worked to expand the limited repertoire by commissioning new works and adapting contemporary works from outside of the guitar repertoire.

With the help of eight and eleven-string guitars the quartet has created an original catalogue of arrangements by composers such as Philip Glass, Steve Reich, Arvo Pärt and György Ligeti. The DGQ’s work has brought the attention of some of the world’s leading composers. This includes an album release on Philip Glass’s Orange Mountain Music label and a new 55-minute commission by Michael Gordon (NY). In April 2015, the quartet performed alongside the Grammy award-winning LA Guitar Quartet, Conspirare and Texas Guitar Quartet in a premiere of *How Little You Are* for three guitar quartets and choir by Nico Muhly in Austin, Texas. In 2019 DGQ per-

formed their own reduction of this work in a US tour in collaboration with vocal ensemble Roomful of Teeth. The quartet have also premiered a commission by Chicago-based composer Marc Mellits in Syracuse, NY in March of 2016.

Other performance highlights include a four-city tour of Colombia and nine tours of North America. The DGQ have also performed at the prestigious chamber music venue, Wigmore Hall in London and the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. They have also performed in many of the leading venues in the US including The Philips Collection Washington, Celebrity Series Boston, SubCulture, Symphony Space, Yale University, and the Lincoln Center in New York. In 2019 the quartet performed as one of the jury selected ensembles at Classical Next, Rotterdam.

The DGQ are developing the electric side of their guitar quartet repertoire with works like *Amplified* a recent commission for electric guitar quartet by Michael Gordon. This was premiered at the David Lang/Bang on a Can curated festival of new music at the National Concert Hall, Dublin in February 2015. The US premiere took place at four-night residency at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) in December 2016.

PROGRAM NOTES

Working as both a composer of new classical music and a founding member of rock band The National, **Bryce Dessner** (B. 1976) is one of those rare artists that has won Grammy® awards for recordings in both rock and classical genres. He has been commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Eighth Blackbird, and Sō Percussion to name a few. He has also composed music for film with Alejandro González Iñárritu’s *The Revenant* as a recent example.

Aheym was originally written for the Kronos Quartet and was released on Epitaph records in 2013. Dessner’s background as a rock guitarist is obvious in the jagged syncopated chords and aggressive arpeggios that characterize much of *Aheym*. It is these characteristics that lead Dublin Guitar Quartet to make their transcription for guitar ensemble.

“Dublin Guitar Quartet has carved a place for itself in the world of classical music. I am delighted that my music is part of their repertoire.”

—Philip Glass, 2014

Philip Glass (B. 1937) is considered one of the most influential composers of the late

twentieth century. As he established himself Glass's approach of austere and repetitive music was radical relative to the heavy avant garde nature of the majority of "serious" classical music during the 60's and 70's. This earned him the label "minimalist." Glass has distanced himself from this label, describing himself instead as a composer of "music with repetitive structures."

Dublin Guitar Quartet continue their exploration of the work of Philip Glass with four new transcriptions from his set of 20 piano etudes. Glass' work has always featured strongly in the repertoire of DGQ and his work is an important element in the development of the group. In 2014 Philip Glass' own record label Orange Mountain Music released *Dublin Guitar Quartet performs Philip Glass* which comprised their transcriptions of string quartets 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Rachel Grimes (B. 1970) is a Kentucky-based composer who came to the attention of Dublin Guitar Quartet as far

back as 2001 while Grimes was a member of the "post-rock" instrumental group Rachels. Rachels are no longer in operation but Grimes is busy as a composer with her "folk opera" *The Way Forth* premiering at the Big Ears Festival, Knoxville, Tennessee in 2019.

These selected movements of *Book of Leaves* are transcribed for guitar quartet from the solo piano work released in 2009.

Chicago based composer **Marc Mellits** (B. 1966) has been commissioned by groups such as the Kronos Quartet, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bang On A Can All-Stars, Eliot Fisk, Third Coast Percussion, New Music Detroit, and Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, and his music has been toured, and/or recorded by members of the Detroit Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Brooklyn Philharmonic, and Eighth Blackbird to name a few. Mellits worked as an assistant to composer Steve Reich and is credited with creating the first working

score of Reich's *Music For Eighteen Musicians*.

Titan was originally written for string quartet and bass clarinet in 2018. This is DGQ's second collaboration with Mellits. *Ninkasi* for guitar quartet was commissioned for Dublin Guitar Quartet by the Syracuse Friends of Chamber music and was premiered during a DGQ tour in Syracuse in 2015.

Summa is perhaps Estonian composer **Arvo Pärt's** (B. 1935) most well-known work. It is a perfect example of his trademark technique of static tonic-chord (Do-Mi-So) arpeggios against scale movement which he calls *tintinnabuli*. Dublin Guitar Quartet received guidance from the composer during the creation of their transcription of this choral work and it was subsequently published by the composer's publisher Universal Edition.

—Program Notes by Dublin Guitar Quartet



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Program to be announced.

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