Saturday Evening, March 18, 2017 at 8:00
Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor

STEVE REICH @ 80
MUSIC FOR 18 MUSICIANS

Performed by
Eighth Blackbird
Third Coast Percussion

RENEGUE

49th Performance of the 138th Annual Season
138th Annual Choral Union Series
Tonight’s presenting sponsor is the Renegade Ventures Fund, established by Maxine and Stuart Frankel.

Tonight’s supporting sponsor is Level X Talent.

Tonight’s performance will be livestreamed, with an archived version available online at UMS.org. Tonight’s performance and livestream is funded in part by the Building Audiences for Sustainability initiative of The Wallace Foundation, which aims to develop practical insights into how arts organizations can attract new audiences while retaining current ones.

Media partnership provided by WGTE 91.3 FM, Ann Arbor’s 107one, Metro Times, and WDET 101.9 FM.

The Steinway pianos used in this evening’s performance are made possible by William and Mary Palmer.

Special thanks to Tom Thompson of Tom Thompson Flowers, Ann Arbor, for his generous contribution of lobby floral art for this evening’s performance.

Special thanks to Matt Albert, Joseph Gramley, and Heather Kendrick for their participation in events surrounding this evening’s performance.

Special thanks to Tiffany Ng, assistant professor of carillon and university carillonist, for coordinating the pre-performance music on the Charles Baird Carillon.

Steve Reich @ 80 appears by arrangement with David Lieberman Artists’ Representatives.

In consideration of the artists and the audience, please refrain from the use of electronic devices during the performance.

The photography, sound recording, or videotaping of this performance is prohibited.
PROGRAM

All-Steve Reich Program

Sextet

I. Fast
II. Moderate
III. Slow
IV. Moderate
V. Fast

Sextet is performed attacca (without pause).

Third Coast Percussion, Mr. Duvall, Ms. Kaplan

Intermission

Music for 18 Musicians

Pulses —
Section I —
Section II —
Section IIIA —
Section IIIB —
Section IV —
Section V —
Section VI —
Section VII —
Section VIII —
Section IX —
Section X —
Section XI —
Pulses

Music for 18 Musicians is performed attacca (without pause).
PERFORMERS

Eighth Blackbird
Nathalie Joachim / Flutes and Voice
Michael J. Maccaferri / Clarinets
Yvonne Lam / Violin
Nick Photinos / Cello
Matthew Duvall / Percussion
Lisa Kaplan / Piano

Third Coast Percussion
Sean Connors / Percussion and Piano
Robert Dillon / Percussion
Peter Martin / Percussion
David Skidmore / Percussion

Featuring
Kayleigh Butcher / Voice
John Corkill / Percussion
Zachary Good / Clarinets
Adam Marks / Piano
Alex Monroe / Percussion and Piano
Elizabeth Pearse / Voice
Doug Perkins / Vibraphone
Daniel Schlosberg / Piano
Carrie Henneman Shaw / Voice

Eighth Blackbird is ensemble-in-residence at the University of Richmond. Nathalie Joachim is a Burkart Flutes & Piccolos artist. Michael J. Maccaferri is a D'Addario Woodwinds Artist. Matthew Duvall proudly endorses Pearl Drums and Adams Musical Instruments, Vic Firth Sticks and Mallets, Zildjian Cymbals, and Black Swamp Percussion Accessories. Lisa Kaplan is a Steinway Artist.
SEXTET (1984)
MUSIC FOR 18 MUSICIANS (1976)

Steve Reich
Born October 3, 1936 in New York City

UMS premieres: These pieces have never been performed on a UMS concert.

Snapshots of History...In 1984:
· Apple Computer places the Macintosh personal computer on sale in the US
· The TED conference is founded
· US researchers announce their discovery of the AIDS virus

Snapshots of History...In 1976:
· The first class of women is inducted at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis
· Patty Hearst is found guilty of armed robbery of a San Francisco bank
· The punk rock group the Ramones release their first self-titled album

I’d like to ask you participate in an experiment.
No, not like that “totally safe” pharmaceutical study you did for beer money in college.
Sometime this week, I’d like you to buy or cue up a copy of Steve Reich’s Music for 18 Musicians, pull on a pair of headphones, and do a task. Any task. Could be alphabetizing the spice rack, climbing the email Everest toward inbox zero, or making collections for your bookie operation. When you’re done, ask yourself: If opting for a mundane task, did time seem to slip by more effortlessly? If attempting a creative task, did thoughts organize themselves more readily than they usually do?
If I might be so bold, would you visit www.ums.org/reich and post the response “Yes” or “No?” If you’d like to be more specific, about what you were doing and the experience of doing it accompanied by this “soundtrack,” that would be tremendous. This is science. Well, armchair science...but using an armchair that Neil deGrasse Tyson would think is pretty comfy.
Here’s the thing. Beyond a profound love for the music itself, a majority quotient of my musician and writer colleagues believe that this path-carving work increases productivity more than just about any other piece in the repertoire. It is on heavy rotation when deadlines loom, and annually on the evening of April 14 ($).
This piece isn’t just classical music’s life-hack answer to the standing desk or a ping-pong table in the break room, though. Music for 18 Musicians is best experienced live because it is so phenomenally transparent, this connection between movement and sound you are about to witness. Watching the mesmerizing oscillation of mallet heads striking marimbas, flexed fingers feverishly casting
wizardly spells on piano ivories, and the pulsating throats of the vocalists — it’s as though the sound waves are being projected from the lighting booth above you. Ripples are visible across the stage as chords mutate, their insides foaming out before the tide pulls them back in.

Part of what makes this piece so extraordinary is its confluence of the mechanical and the organic. The pulse is methodical, dependable even, and given how much of our world is built on cyclic rhythms (the circadian cycle, the oxygen cycle, the calling-your-Internet-Service-Provider cycle), it stands to reason that we are drawn toward repetition. But our humanness is also wonderfully chaotic — often asymmetric and unpredictable and in constant negotiation with our environment. Here’s where things get organic. The real-time breath capacity of the bass clarinet is at times dictating how long each chord is sustained, which makes this performance you’re about to hear singular...and dependent, in part, on how strictly Eighth Blackbird clarinetist Michael Maccaferri has been adhering to his Jazzercise regimen.

That Reich conjures this kaleidoscopic panorama with just 11 primary chords, moving from plucky optimism of Section I, through the nervous deliberations of Section VII, and into the positively euphoric waterfall of Section X. We are guided so gently, so seamlessly, through these and the surrounding movements that time stretches and inverts even though the performers are offering us a metronome at every given moment. If you find yourself wondering how this musical amoeba holds together, keep an eye on Doug Perkins there on the vibraphone. His licks denote movement forward to the rest of the ensemble. In the words of the composer, “much as in Balinese gamelan a drummer will audibly call for changes of pattern in West African music.”

If you are the kind of person that walks back to your car 4–5 times at a pop to make sure it is locked, you may find yourself feeling very satisfied at the conclusion of Music for 18 Musicians. (Except that now you’re wondering.) In any case, one reason may be that Reich turns to the obsessive’s catnip known as arch form (ABCDCBA) in a number of the piece’s sections. It’s a theme shared with this evening’s other selection, Sextet, the five movements of which also form an arch (ABCBA).

Quick sidebar: if you’d like to dig into arch form elsewhere, see Bartók’s fourth and fifth string quartets, Lutosławski’s Musique funèbre, or get your melancholy on with Barber’s Adagio for Strings.

If Music for 18 Musicians is a kind of field recording of our interior rhythms and cycles, Sextet is the music of the metropolis. The opening, “I. Fast,” could convincingly be the default soundtrack playing inside the first commercially available driverless car, its buoyant marimba canons and

“Balinese gamelan music cross-dressing as Minimalism.”
—David Bowie, on Music for 18 Musicians
shimmering bowed vibraphones offering promises of a brighter future. Whereas the sections of *Music for 18* seem to melt into each other, the five continuous movements of Sextet are marked by abrupt, seismic hits in the pianos. Maneuvering between movements feels a bit like entering a series of breathtaking skyscraper lobbies and having the pressure vacuum of your entry slam the door behind you every time. For example, the fourth movement, “Moderate,” is a groovy 1970s building in which slithering synthesizers conjure up images of decadent, persimmon-hued sofas and spherical glass chandeliers. Skyscrapers or not, each of these movements feel towering and spacious, arriving by way of a kind of echo effect between instruments — canons and double-canons. Watching this unfold, especially between like pairs of instruments is instant, transcendent meditation.

You know that thing we do in classical music...where during a pre-concert talk the speaker reads some below-the-belt review from the 19th century about the premiere of a piece that is now near-universally adored? The audience chuckles knowingly and scoffs at the critic’s idiocy. Well, rash judgments about new music aren’t relegated to previous centuries. When I was a viola fellow at the New World Symphony, conductor Michael Tilson Thomas was rehearsing us in front of Steve Reich, live via Internet 2 (think: a souped-up Skype video call). MTT was reminiscing with his buddy Steve that back when they were performing Steve’s music a few decades earlier, audiences would literally try to overwhelm the performers with their booing during their shows. Steve Reich. The guy that won the Pulitzer in 2009. The guy that the *New Yorker* calls “the most original musical thinker of our time.”

If the music you hear tonight sounds provocative to you...you’re right! If you happen to be the kind of person that gives Reich albums to friends who claim they don’t like new music, because Reich is the most effective gateway drug...you’re also right! Either way, I hypothesize that you’ll leave this concert feeling like your brain and your body are burning brighter and noticeably more in sync.

Now for that in-home trial. Let me know.

*Program note by Doyle Armbrust.*

*Doyle Armbrust is a Chicago-based violist and member of the Spektral Quartet and Ensemble Dal Niente. He is a contributing writer for WQXR’s Q2 Music, Crain’s Chicago Business, Chicago Magazine, Chicago Tribune, and formerly, Time Out Chicago.*
This evening’s performance marks Eighth Blackbird’s third UMS appearance, following its UMS debut in April 2008 with two performances at the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre in a program that included Steve Reich’s Pulitzer Prize-winning Double Sextet. The ensemble most recently appeared at UMS in January 2015 at Rackham Auditorium. Doug Perkins makes his second UMS appearance this evening following his UMS debut in January 2015 with Eighth Blackbird. UMS welcomes Third Coast Percussion, Kayleigh Butcher, John Corkill, Zachary Good, Adam Marks, Alex Monroe, Elizabeth Pearse, Daniel Schlosberg, and Carrie Henneman Shaw, who make their UMS debuts this evening.

Photo (previous spread): Steve Reich; photographer: Jeffrey Herman.
**ARTISTS**

**Eighth Blackbird** is “one of the smartest, most dynamic contemporary classical ensembles on the planet” (*Chicago Tribune*). Launched by six entrepreneurial Oberlin Conservatory undergraduates in 1996, this Chicago-based super-group has earned its status as “a brand-name... defined by adventure, vibrancy, and quality....known for performing from memory, employing choreography and collaborations with theater artists, lighting designers, and even puppetry artists” (*Detroit Free Press*).

Over the course of two decades, Eighth Blackbird has commissioned and premiered hundreds of works by composers such as David Lang, Steven Mackey, Missy Mazzoli, and Steve Reich, whose *Double Sextet* went on to win the Pulitzer Prize (2009). A long-term relationship with Chicago’s Cedille Records has produced seven acclaimed recordings and four Grammy Awards for “Best Small Ensemble/Chamber Music Performance”: *strange imaginary animals* (2008), *Lonely Motel: Music from Slide* (2011), *Meanwhile* (2013), and *Filament* (2015). *Hand Eye*, their most recent recording released in March 2016 and featuring the music of composer collective Sleeping Giant, was hailed as “dazzling” and “vigorously, flawlessly performed” (*WQXR*).

Eighth Blackbird celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2016, winning its fourth Grammy Award and the coveted MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions. January 2017 saw them hailed as Musical America’s “Ensemble of the Year” and the recipients of Chamber Music America’s inaugural Visionary Award. Anniversary celebrations continue throughout the 2016–17 season with tours from its two most recent and broadly-acclaimed albums, *Filament* and *Hand Eye*, as well as keystone performances celebrating Steve Reich’s 80th birthday, a fresh round of raucous shows with “Appalachian post-punk solipsist” (*The Wanderer*) Will Oldham (Bonnie Prince Billy), and world premieres by Holly Harrison, Pulitzer Prize-winner David Lang, and Ned McGowan. This season marks debuts at Justin Vernon’s (Bon Iver) and Aaron Dessner’s (The National) Eaux Claires Festival, a collaboration with the San Francisco Symphony, performances in Paris, France, and a three-week tour of Australia.

Eighth Blackbird’s mission — to move music forward through innovative performance, advocacy for new music by living composers, and a legacy of guiding an emerging generation of musicians — extends beyond recording and touring to curation and education. The ensemble served as music director of the Ojai Music Festival (2009), enjoyed a three-year residency at the Curtis Institute of Music, and holds an ongoing ensemble-in-residence position at the University of Richmond. The 2015–16 season featured a pioneering residency at Chicago’s Museum of Contemporary Art, serving as a living installation with open rehearsals, performances, guest artists, and public talks. In 2017, Eighth Blackbird launches its boldest initiative yet with the creation of Blackbird Creative Laboratory, a tuition-free, two-week summer workshop and performance festival for musicians in Ojai, California.

Eighth Blackbird’s members hail from the Great Lakes, Keystone, Golden, Empire, and Bay states. The name “Eighth Blackbird” derives from the eighth stanza of Wallace Stevens’ evocative, imagistic poem, *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird*: “I know noble accents / And
UMS Lobby Takeover

Before this evening's performance, U-M School of Music, Theatre and Dance students bring to life Steve Reich's musical influences in three lobbies of Hill Auditorium, in a set of performances curated by Joseph Gramley, director of percussion studies, and Matthew Albert, chair of the chamber music department.

**University of Michigan West African Drumming Ensemble**

*Program to include Ewe barrel drumming from the Volta region of Ghana*

Shane Jones / Director
Charles Bartlett
Sofia Carbonara
Chelsea Tinsler Jones
Jonathan Mashburn
Alec Ockaskis
Jacob Rogers
Christopher Weber

After receiving a grant from the Institute for International Education in 1970, Reich conducted a five-week research trip in Ghana to study West African drumming from Gideon Alorwoyie at the Institute for African Studies at the University of Ghana in Accra. His exposure to and study of the polyrhythmic layering and texturing in West African drumming, specifically that of the Ewe people from the Volta region of Ghana, was a large inspiration in composing his first masterpiece, *Drumming*, in 1970–71. The inspiration of polyrhythmic counterpoint found in Ewe drumming can also be heard in many of Reich's later works, including *Sextet* and *Music for 18 Musicians*. In an effort to illustrate the West African heritage in Reich's music, the U-M West African Drumming Ensemble will be performing traditional Ewe rhythms learned from the Agbeli family in the village of Kopeyia, Ghana.

—Shane Jones, DMA Graduate School Instructor, University of Michigan School
Violin Phase
Steve Reich

Esther Lee / Violin
Tiffany Loe / Violin
Heewon Uhm / Violin
Iris Wu / Violin

Reich’s Violin Phase was among the first pieces that mimicked the tape process he discovered in his 1965 composition, It’s Gonna Rain. The tapes began to “phase” as one tape moved slightly ahead of another and in doing so, created interesting juxtapositions of sound and structure. Although there is no phasing in Music for 18 Musicians, the rhythmic structure of Violin Phase is similarly influenced by Ghanaian rhythms like those performed by the U-M West African Drumming Ensemble this evening. Additionally, the melodic patterns of Violin Phase are closely quoted by the pianos in Section V of Music for 18 Musicians.

Africa
John Coltrane

Alain Sullivan / Tenor Saxophone
Jordan Anderson / Piano
Seamus Lynch / Bass
David Ward / Drums

“The giant in all this harmonic stasis for me was John Coltrane in his Africa Brass album of 1961 where the title tune is 16 minutes — all on ‘E’!...the low ‘E’ of the double bass played by Jimmy Garrison. How did he make 16 minutes on one harmony riveting? Well, first by remarkable melodic invention and sometimes by almost screaming through his instrument, then by incredible rhythmic complexity played by Elvin Jones, and finally by timbral variety arranged by Eric Dolphy for French horns playing glissandos that sounded like charging elephants.”

—Steve Reich, in a 2013 interview with Phil Johnson of The Independent, “Rock was pretty much off my radar — then came Radiohead”
lucid, inescapable rhythms; / But I know, too, / That the blackbird is involved / In what I know.” Eighth Blackbird is managed by David Lieberman Artists. For more info, please visit www.eighthblackbird.org.

**Third Coast Percussion** is a Grammy-winning, artist-run quartet of classically trained percussionists hailing from the great city of Chicago. For over 10 years, the ensemble has forged a unique path in the musical landscape with virtuosic, energetic performances that celebrate the extraordinary depth and breadth of musical possibilities in the world of percussion. The ensemble has been praised for “commandingly elegant” (*New York Times*) performances, and the “rare power” (*Washington Post*) of their recordings. The four members of Third Coast are also accomplished teachers, and since 2012, have served as ensemble-in-residence at the University of Notre Dame’s DeBartolo Performing Arts Center.

A direct connection with the audience is at the core of all of Third Coast Percussion’s work. Percussion instruments are perhaps the oldest musical instruments, and any object on the planet that produces sound can be a percussion instrument. Perhaps this is why audiences seem to have an innate attraction to percussion instruments. A spirit of inclusivity inspires all that Third Coast Percussion does, whether the musicians are speaking from the stage about a new piece of music, inviting the audience to play along in a concert or educational performance, or inviting their fans around the world to create new music using one of their free mobile apps.

The quartet’s curiosity and eclectic taste have led to a series of unlikely collaborations that have produced exciting new art. The ensemble has worked with engineers at the University of Notre Dame, architects at the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, dancers at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and musicians from traditions ranging from the *mbira* music of Zimbabwe’s Shona people, to indie rockers, to some of the world’s leading concert musicians.

A commission for a new work from Augusta Read Thomas in 2012 led to the realization that commissioning new musical works can be — and should be — as collaborative as any other artistic partnership. Through extensive work-shopping and close contact with composers, Third Coast Percussion has commissioned and premiered new works from Donnacha Dennehy, Glenn Kotche, Lei Liang, Gavin Bryars, Christopher Cerrone, Timo Andres, Marcos Balter, Ted Hearne, and today’s leading up-and-coming composers through their Emerging Composers Partnership Program. These works have become part of the ensemble’s core repertoire and seen hundreds of performances across North America and throughout Europe.

Third Coast Percussion maintains a busy touring schedule, with past performances in 32 of the 50 states plus Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland, and venues ranging from concert halls at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and De Doelen to clubs and alternative performance spaces such as New York’s Le Poisson Rouge and the National Gallery’s West Garden Court.

Third Coast Percussion’s recordings include three full-length albums, three EPs, and a number of appearances on other releases. The quartet has put its stamp on iconic percussion works by John Cage and Steve Reich, and Third Coast has also created first recordings of commissioned works by Augusta Read Thomas, David T. Little, and Ted Hearne, in
addition to recordings of the ensemble’s own compositions. In 2017 the ensemble was awarded a Grammy Award for “Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance” for its recording of Steve Reich’s works for percussion.

Third Coast Percussion has always maintained strong ties to the vibrant artistic community in their hometown of Chicago. The quartet has collaborated with Chicago institutions such as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and the Adler Planetarium, performed at the grand opening of Maggie Daley Children’s Park, conducted residencies at the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, created multi-year collaborative projects with Chicago-based composers Augusta Read Thomas, Glenn Kotche, and chamber ensemble Eighth Blackbird, and taught tens of thousands of students through partnerships with Urban Gateways, the People’s Music School, the Chicago Park District, Rush Hour Concerts, and others.

The four members of Third Coast Percussion met while studying music at Northwestern University. Members of Third Coast also hold degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Rutgers University, the New England Conservatory, and the Yale School of Music. Stay up-to-date and go behind-the-scenes by following Third Coast on Twitter (@ThirdCoastPerc), Facebook (@Third Coast Percussion), and Instagram (@ThirdCoastPercussion). Third Coast Percussion is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Steve Reich was recently called “our greatest living composer” (New York Times) and “…the most original musical thinker of our time” (The New Yorker). From his early taped speech pieces It’s Gonna Rain (1965) and Come Out (1966) to his and video artist Beryl Korot’s digital video opera Three Tales (2002), Mr. Reich’s path has embraced not only aspects of Western Classical music, but the structures, harmonies, and rhythms of non-Western and American vernacular music, particularly jazz. In April 2009 Steve Reich was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music for his composition Double Sextet. He records exclusively with Nonesuch, on which label Different Trains (1988) earned him a Grammy Award for “Best Contemporary Composition” and Music for 18 Musicians a second. The current season sees worldwide celebrations of Mr. Reich’s 80th birthday, guided by performances of two new major works — Pulse (Carnegie Hall premiere) and Runner. The ensemble work Runner premiered at London’s Royal Ballet last November, accompanied by a new ballet choreographed by Wayne McGregor. In 1994 Steve Reich was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, to the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts in 1995, and, in 1999, awarded Commandeur de l’ordre des Arts et Lettres.
TONIGHT'S VICTORS FOR UMS:

Renegade Ventures Fund, established by Maxine and Stuart Frankel
—
Level X Talent
—
The Wallace Foundation

MAY WE ALSO RECOMMEND...

3/29        DakhaBrakha
3/30–4/1    Complicite/Simon McBurney: The Encounter
4/12        A Far Cry with Roomful of Teeth

Tickets available at www.ums.org.

ON THE EDUCATION HORIZON...

3/25        Pre-Concert Lecture Series: Exploring Beethoven’s String Quartets
            (Michigan League Koessler Room, Third Floor, 911 N. University Ave.,
            7:00 pm)

3/30        Renegade Pre-Performance Talk: The Encounter
            (Power Center Lobby, 121 Fletcher Street, 7:00 pm)
            Must have a ticket to the 3/30 performance to attend.

Educational events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.