

**SONIC ILLINOIS**  
***A THOUSAND THOUGHTS—***  
**A LIVE DOCUMENTARY WITH THE KRONOS QUARTET**  
**WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY SAM GREEN AND JOE BINI**

Wednesday, February 27, 2019, at 7:30pm  
Tryon Festival Theatre

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# PROGRAM

## SONIC ILLINOIS

**A THOUSAND THOUGHTS—**

**A LIVE DOCUMENTARY WITH THE KRONOS QUARTET**

**WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY SAM GREEN AND JOE BINI**

## KRONOS QUARTET

David Harrington, violin

John Sherba, violin

Hank Dutt, viola

Sunny Yang, cello

Sam Green and Joe Bini, filmmakers

Brian H. Scott, lighting design

Brian Mohr, sound design

Philip Glass

(b. 1937)

*String Quartet No. 2 (Company)*

Movement II\*

Terry Riley

(b. 1935)

*Requiem for Adam (excerpt)\**

George Crumb

(b. 1929)

*Black Angels*

10. God-music

1. Threnody I: Night of the Electric Insects (excerpt)

Ryan Brown

(b. 1979)

*Pinched\**

John Adams

(b. 1947)

"Judah to Ocean" from *John's Book of Alleged Dances\**

Tanya Tagaq

(b. 1975)

(arr. Jacob Garchik)

*Sivunittinni (excerpt)\*\**

Ken Benshoof

(b. 1933)

*Traveling Music\**

I. Gentle, easy

Fodé Lassana Diabaté

(b. 1971)

(arr. Jacob Garchik)

*Sunjata's Time\*\**

5. Bara kala ta

Terry Riley (b. 1935)	<i>The Wheel</i> *
David Harrington (b. 1986)	"Drone" from <i>Dirty Wars</i> *
Café Tacvba (arr. Osvaldo Golijov)	12/12 (excerpt)*
Philip Glass (b. 1937)	<i>String Quartet No. 3</i> (Mishima Quartet) Blood Oath
Aleksandra Vrebalov (b. 1970)	<i>The Sea Ranch Songs</i> * 7. Chapel, Rainbows
Laurie Anderson (b. 1947) (arr. Jacob Garchik)	<i>Flow</i> +
John Zorn (b. 1953)	"Meditation (The Blue of Noon)" from <i>The Dead Man</i> *
Pérotin (1160-1230) (arr. Kronos Quartet)	<i>Viderunt Omnes</i> (excerpt)+
Clint Mansell (b. 1963) (arr. David Lang)	Selections from <i>Requiem for a Dream</i> + Lux Aeterna Ghosts of a Future Lost
John Oswald (b. 1953)	<i>Spectre</i> (excerpt)*
Wu Man (b. 1963)	<i>Two Chinese Paintings</i> II. Silk and Bamboo (inspired by <i>Huanlege</i> )*
Ervin T. Rouse (1917-1981) (arr. Danny Clay)	<i>Orange Blossom Special</i> (excerpt)+

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\* Written for Kronos

\*\* Written for Kronos and composed for Fifty for the Future: The Kronos Learning Repertoire

+ Arranged for Kronos

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*A Thousand Thoughts: A Live Documentary* by Sam Green & Kronos Quartet was commissioned by The Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi, Barbican, Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA, Exploratorium, Christos V. Konstantakopoulos, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, MASS MoCA, Melbourne Festival, Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University through its Wexner Center Artist Residency Award program.

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*This film was supported by Sundance Catalyst.*

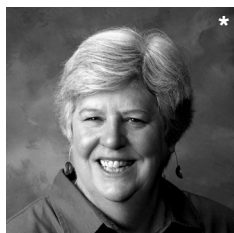
*Sonic Illinois, a month-long celebration of new music, honors innovative creators who challenge convention, forge pathways, and expand the creative process. Through Sonic Illinois, Krannert Center and the School of Music collaboratively explore the tremendous diversity of today's vital contemporary music scene—a revival of the spirit of the University of Illinois Festival of Contemporary Arts, which was a major cultural force in the mid-20th century.*

*Kronos Quartet appears by arrangement with:*  
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\*PHOTO CREDIT: ILLINI STUDIO

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# PROGRAM NOTES

A bow made of wood and horsehair coated with resin from trees scrapes across a string, which makes vibrations in the hollow of the wooden instrument, which travel as a series of sound waves in the subtle matter of the air and, perhaps, penetrate the labyrinth of a human ear, or a hundred or a thousand, and this vibration is interpreted by the brain or the brains as information that might have, to use a word that means such vibrations, resonance as a source of pleasure or pain or sorrow. This is one way to describe a note of music on a violin. It is as ephemeral as the waves of the sea or ripples in water; it arises, it fades, it exists in time, and that ephemerality always speaks of mortality and the desire to transcend it, of motion that exists in time, of life that is itself a kind of motion, since we call the living animate and the un-living inanimate.

Human beings have acknowledged and transcended mortality with culture, with rites and songs and other elaborations that can be passed on and bridge more than one human life, that can spread like ripples on a pond, like a sound, that can be reiterated. *A Thousand Thoughts* begins with the story of *The Lost Chord*, a song that was one of the first songs recorded as the technology to convert live sound into tiny impressions on a wax cylinder (and later on phonograph records [phono for sound, graph for writing; these were literally devices for writing down sound], then on magnetic tape, and then as digital data that shaved off some of the fuzz of the vibrations to make something perhaps a little pared down and cleaner than what sounded in the studio where the recording was made).

*A Thousand Thoughts* begins with the irony of *The Lost Chord*, because it was about music heard once and never recovered that offered some joy, some solution, some peace that then vanished, about the sense of loss that was tied to death and perhaps to the impossibility of hanging onto transcendent moments. Perhaps it begins with that story because in it is the desire of all art and its particular contradictions that unfolds in time, like music—that pleasure in the ephemeral, in sounds that can only exist in time itself, and that desire to transcend time, to shore something up against its depredations. A note is heard, it fades, it is gone. There is no music outside of time, and time itself is full of the impossibility of keeping and the inevitability of change, that force that sometimes feels like liberation and sometimes like tragedy.

Kronos founder David Harrington described something akin to *The Lost Chord* to Sam Green as a quest, saying “We have not created the bulletproof piece of music that will prevent harm from happening—you know, [that] a young child can wrap around herself or a grandparent can wrap around his family. We haven’t been able to do that yet, but I think it’s possible, and I spend every minute of my waking life trying to find that.”

*A Thousand Thoughts*, a thousand questions, mine, yours, ours, theirs; questions that perhaps open up things that definitive answers would only nail shut. Kronos Quartet’s long trajectory offers a series of questions that are solid and answers that are elusive: how do you find a path between predictability and instability, how do you have both a clear identity and an open door that lets in new ideas and collaborators, how do you keep the faith that what you’re doing matters, how do

you make an art that grows like a tree, ring by ring, year by year, and stands as a testament? How do you keep it alive through all the changes, how do you incorporate the change that is, as my photographic collaborator Mark Klett likes to say, the measure of time, or how do you proceed as Shunryu Suzuki-Roshi said in some instructions for Zen Buddhist practice, "not too tight, not too loose," not so tied by custom and convention and the past, while not so formless that you lurch and spill into whatever the present offers?

There was an old idea of immortality as a transcendence, as a beauty, as a power that was less about living forever than about lifting someone out of themselves and the gloom and despond of mortality, and there is also the particular beauty of mortality, of this light that will never shine the same way twice, of the spring that will be devoured by the summer, the youth that will be consumed by maturity, the freshness of beginnings, and the ripeness of arrival.

The live music of this live film raises other questions, about irreproducible and evanescent experience, about the water that runs through your fingers, about the events that cannot be reconstituted. How do you swim upstream against what film and all our digital era has become, an immersion in recordings, images, and reproductions? Once, everything happened and was then irretrievable, though you could sketch it or describe it in words on paper or spoken aloud. Then in the late 1830s came photography, promising exact replication of the visible, and half a century later came recorded sound, promising exact replication of the audible. They had photographs, then phonographs; they thought

that they had conquered time; we had even more recording technology, even more data stored, even more ease in capturing every moment.

Did we conquer time or were we conquered by substitutes for presence? Did we give up the moment itself, the things themselves, for their reproductions? Did we fall into substitutes and fakes and lose our grasp on the moment, give up presence for absence and in the process lose ourselves that are also mortal, time bound, eternally changing, eternally invited to witness in the moment? Is there a way that thinking you will never die becomes a way to never live, like the person who tries to document the moment so that in the future the past will be retrievable and only misses the present? The present, that pun in English for gifts and for now.

The foundation for modern cinema was laid when Eadweard Muybridge animated sequential photographs and when Thomas Edison captured recorded sound on his wax cylinders. The latter man saw it as an uncanny act, a reaching into the grave, a dance with the dead.

"In the year 1887," Edison later remembered, "it occurred to me that it was possible to devise an instrument which would do for the eye what the phonograph does for the ear and that, by a combination of the two, all motion and sound could be recorded and reproduced simultaneously. I believe that in coming years by my own work and that of Dickson, Muybridge, Marey, and others who will doubtless enter the field, that grand opera can be given at the Metropolitan Opera House at New York . . . with artists and musicians long since dead."

He declares that cinema is a ghost dance, as I said somewhere else, that it is a raising of the dead or at least a fraternizing with the dead and the gone. It is not about presence but absence and the ability to be with whom and what is absent. Harrington wanted to make a music that would protect a child from harm, but Edison aspired to revive the dead at least enough to make them sing for us. Perhaps in that is the difference between the present and the past recaptured.

Edison's astonishing declaration raises as well a question that Sam Green has tried to answer: what is live cinema, what is it to be fully present, what is it to have the thing itself and not its representation, what is it to be here and now in

an age of being anywhere but here, and every time but this irreproducible moment? What is it to have a film mixed live before you, prone to accidents and serendipities, to be each time something else, of its time, and not outside it, to hear music as a vibration of horsehair and wood and the movement of muscles traveling through the air and then into the labyrinth of your ear, with all the nuances that get sanded down and painted over by a digital recording? What is the work of art in the age of digital reproduction, and what is it to be in the presence and the present?

— *Rebecca Solnit*



## KRONOS QUARTET

For more than 45 years, San Francisco's Kronos Quartet—David Harrington (violin), John Sherba (violin), Hank Dutt (viola), and Sunny Yang (cello)—has combined a spirit of fearless exploration with a commitment to continually reimagine the string quartet experience. In the process, Kronos has become one of the world's most celebrated and influential ensembles, performing thousands of concerts, releasing more than 60 recordings, collaborating with an eclectic mix of composers and performers, and commissioning over 1,000 works and arrangements for string quartet. They have won over 40 awards, including a Grammy Award and the prestigious Polar Music and Avery Fisher Prizes. The nonprofit Kronos Performing Arts Association manages all aspects of Kronos' work, including the commissioning of new works, concert tours, and home season performances, education programs, and a self-produced Kronos Festival. In 2015, Kronos launched *Fifty for the Future: The Kronos Learning Repertoire*, an education and legacy project that is commissioning—and distributing for free—the first learning library of contemporary repertoire for string quartet.

**SAM GREEN** (filmmaker) is a New York-based documentary filmmaker. He received his master's degree in journalism from University of California, Berkeley, where he studied documentary filmmaking with the acclaimed filmmaker Marlon Riggs. Green's most recent projects are the "live documentaries" *The Measure of All Things* (2014), *The Love Song of R. Buckminster Fuller* with Yo La Tengo (2012), and *Utopia in Four Movements* (2010). His performance work has screened at venues such as the Barbican, The Kitchen, TBA Festival, Fusebox Festival, Brighton Festival, and many others. Green's 2004 feature-length film, the Academy Award-nominated documentary *The Weather Underground*, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, was broadcast on PBS, was included in the 2004 Whitney Biennial, and has screened widely around the world.

**JOE BINI** (filmmaker) is a filmmaker, writer, and editor who works in both fiction and nonfiction forms. He is best known for his 20-year collaboration with Werner Herzog, resulting in such notable films as *Grizzly Man*, *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, *Into the Abyss*, and *The Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans*. He has also edited the groundbreaking films *We Need to Talk About Kevin* and *You Were Never Really Here*, directed by Lynne Ramsay, and *American Honey*, directed by Andrea Arnold, as well as Nick Broomfield's *Tales of the Grim Sleeper*. He has lectured on and taught cinema in film schools worldwide.

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# PRODUCTION CREDITS

## **Directed, written, and edited by**

Sam Green  
Joe Bini

## **Music performed by Kronos Quartet**

David Harrington  
John Sherba  
Hank Dutt  
Sunny Yang

## **Cinematography**

Kirsten Johnson

## **Producers**

Janet Cowperthwaite  
Sam Green

## **Executive Producers**

Josh Penn  
Maida Lynn  
Kenneth and Elizabeth Whitney

## **Co-Producers**

Thomas O. Kriegsmann  
Brendan Doyle

## **Lighting Designer, Performance**

Brian H. Scott

## **Sound Designer, Performance**

Scott Fraser

## **Produced in Association with**

ArKtype  
C41 Media  
The Department of Motion Pictures  
Genuine Article Pictures

## **Motion Design**

Work-Order

## **Additional Cinematography**

Yoni Brook  
Pete Sillen  
Raf Fellner  
Andrew Black  
David Kaplowitz

## **Associate Producer**

Evan Neff

## **Assistant Editor**

Jonathan Rapoport

## **KRONOS QUARTET/ KRONOS PERFORMING ARTS ASSOCIATION**

Janet Cowperthwaite, managing director  
Mason Dille, development manager  
Dana Dizon, business operations manager  
Sarah Donahue, production operations manager  
Lauren Frankel, development associate  
Scott Fraser, senior sound designer  
Sasha Hnatkovich, communications manager  
Sara Langlands, community engagement and  
festival manager  
Reshena Liao, creative projects manager  
Nicolás McConnie-Saad, office manager  
Brian Mohr, sound designer, technical manager  
Kären Nagy, strategic initiatives director  
Brian H. Scott, lighting designer

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Meriko Borogove  
Bill Bragin  
Camille Brunet  
Neil Burger  
Stuart Candy  
Rachel Chanoff  
Robert Chehoski  
Michele Clement  
Bonni Cohen  
Mary Fernando Conrad  
Tony Conrad  
Victoria Cook  
Susan Coyle  
Libby Craig  
Mary Cybulski  
Jay Dehejia  
Alejandro Delgado  
Dale Djerassi

Katie Doering  
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Kristin Feeley  
Alison Byrne Fields  
Dave Filipi  
Kate Fowle  
Vallejo Gantner  
Jacob Garchik  
Sherri Geldin  
Jeanne Giordano  
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Michael Gottwald  
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Agnes Gund  
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