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ALARM WILL SOUND

"One of the most vital and original ensembles on the American music scene." —The New York Times

"As close to being a rock band as a chamber orchestra can be" (*The New York Times*), Alarm Will Sound is a 20-member touring ensemble led by Artistic Director Alan Pierson that commissions, performs, and records innovative works by established and emerging composers, especially works that incorporate theatrical and multimedia elements by choreographers, visual artists, designers, and directors. Its wide-ranging artistic vision looks beyond genre—electronic vs. acoustic, high-modernist vs. pop-influenced, conventional classical concert vs. multimedia experience.

Past and Upcoming Venues

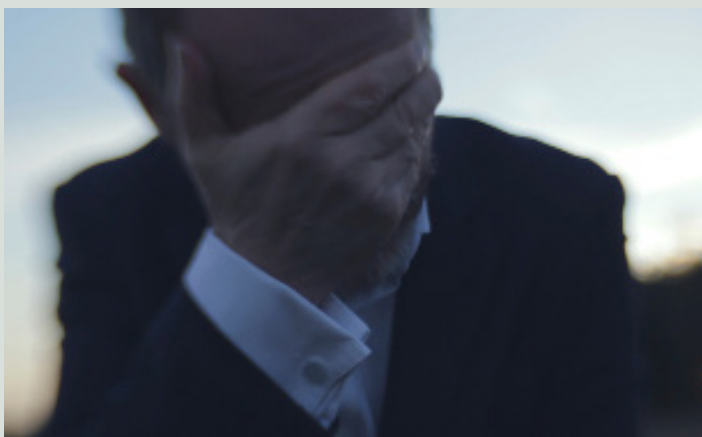
Carnegie Hall, New York
BAM, Brooklyn
Lincoln Center, New York
(Le) Poisson Rouge, New York
Millennium Park, Chicago
Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles
Kimmel Center, Philadelphia
Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland
Library of Congress, Washington, DC
MärzMusik, Berlin
The Barbican, London
Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg
Pro Arte, St. Petersburg

Alarm Will Sound's repertoire includes music by...

Hans Abrahamsen	Amy Beth Kirsten
John Adams	Mary Kouyoumdjian
John Luther Adams	David Lang
Oscar Bettison	György Ligeti
Harrison Birtwistle	David T. Little
Tyondai Braxton	Alex Mincek
King Britt	Kate Moore
Caleb Burhans	Steve Reich
Zosha di Castri	Kate Soper
Donnacha Dennehy	Tyshawn Sorey
Alexandra Drewchin (Eartheter)	Augusta Read Thomas
Julius Eastman	Charles Wuorinen
Georg Friedrich Haas	Chen Yi

Music and Ideas

Alarm Will Sound is happy to collaborate with your organization's artistic team to create programs that suit your stylistic focus or mission. [Click here](#) to see our full repertoire list.



The Hunger

[details](#)

Donnacha Dennehy's *The Hunger* is a work that gives a unique perspective on Ireland's Great Famine. At the heart of *The Hunger* are personal, contemporaneous stories that open a new dimension on the tragedy. These stories are communicated through the characters of "The Irish Voice," portrayed by Irish sean-nós singer Iarla Ó Lionáird, and Asenath Nicholson, portrayed by soprano Katherine Manley.



1969 (Multimedia)

[watch](#)

More than 40 years ago, the Beatles and Karlheinz Stockhausen arranged to meet in New York City to plan a joint concert (which never actually took place). Told through their own words, music, and images, "1969" tells the story of great musicians—John Lennon, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Paul McCartney, Luciano Berio, Yoko Ono, and Leonard Bernstein—striving for a new world and musical ideal amidst the turmoil of the '60s.



Paper Pianos

Mary Kouyoumdjian
Alarm Will Sound

Paper Pianos

[details](#)

Paper Pianos explores the refugee experience through the life of pianist Milad Yousufi who was forced to flee Afghanistan to avoid persecution. Incorporating recorded dialogue from interviews with Mr. Yousufi as well as an animated film, the work vividly depicts the emotional plight of displacement and resettlement experienced by refugees throughout the world.



Mind Out of Matter

[details](#)

Scott Johnson's *Mind Out of Matter* examines religion from an atheist point of view. Instead of choirs singing biblical texts, *Mind Out of Matter* uses the recorded voice of Daniel C. Dennett. Johnson combines musical styles as disparate as Baroque recitative and retro-funk in order to illuminate Dennett's central claim: just as plants and animals evolve in the physical environment, so do ideas and traditions compete within ecosystems made up of human minds and cultures.



ACOUSTICA

ALARM WILL SOUND

Acoustica

[listen](#)

Music by electronica artist Aphex Twin, arranged by ensemble members, is performed alongside pieces that are influenced by electronic music. The music (featured on AWS's *Acoustica* album) is imaginative and quirky, fun to perform, and virtuosic. The challenges of capturing the nearly limitless possibilities available on a computer present a fascinating creative tension in today's world between humans and machines.



Ten Thousand Birds

[watch](#)

John Luther Adams's *Ten Thousand Birds* is an open-ended collection of pieces based on birdsong that encompasses a full range of colors and instrumentation, from solos to full orchestra. Each piece is a self-contained world with its own sense of space and time, and can be performed for an indefinite duration. The pieces can be combined simultaneously and sequentially in varied ways. The flexibility of the score lends itself to site-specific adaptation in outdoor and indoor spaces.



Twinned

[watch](#)

Twinned centers on three pioneers of electronic music: Edgard Varèse, Raymond Scott, and Aphex Twin. In *Twinned*, Alarm Will Sound and Dance Heginbotham have come together to create a music and movement event, one in which both ensembles are involved in all aspects of the performance, the goal being to create an interwoven musical and dramatic experience.



Splitting Adams

[listen](#)

Alarm Will Sound has teamed up with New York Public Radio's Peabody Award-winning podcast *Meet the Composer* to create a new kind of concert experience. *Splitting Adams* fuses the powerful music of John Adams with the power of podcasts to dig deep and get personal. It does not separate stories about the music from the music itself.



King Britt

details

AWS and ground-breaking DJ/producer King Britt come together to find new ways of creating music. This collaboration takes King's vivid, otherworldly, electronic soundscapes and filters them through the formidable interpretive skills of Alarm Will Sound. King is a Red Bull musical artist whose work has been featured in film and television, including *Miami Vice*, *Queen Sugar*, *Rolex*, and *The Blacklist*.



Common Fate

Dance Heginbotham brings its celebrated athleticism, humor and theatricality to live music performed by the Alarm Will Sound. The evening includes Heginbotham choreography to AWS's arrangements of electronica by Tim Exile, Luke Vibert, and others, including choreography for composer Tyondai Braxton's chamber work *Common Fate*.



Chimeras

Composer Alex Mincek creates a sonic chimera in which musical utterances join together to create something altogether unique. By combining variously related texts and musical phrases into a singular body, emergent narratives, associations and questions may arise. Taken together, *Chimeras* challenges ideas of reality and poses questions about the true identity of things.



Earthheater

listen

When Fire is Allowed to Finish, Earthheater's work with Alarm Will Sound, is comprised of six emotionally charged movements. The music is fearlessly expressive, lush, and emotional, and while harkening back to Romanticism with a capital 'R' simultaneously stays rooted in the contemporary by incorporating unusual and unexpected timbres and rhythmic devices.



Additional Offerings

Composer Readings [watch](#)

Alarm Will Sound offers composer readings of works for sinfonietta. Composers are expected to write a work for Alarm Will Sound's complete instrumentation that lasts up to 8 minutes in duration. Due to rehearsal/technical demands, we will not be able to program works that include electronics. During a 3-hour workshop, we are able to read up to four eight-minute pieces.

Educational Programs

As a leader in the field of new music performance, Alarm Will Sound has extended its artistic reach to the field of education by offering creative programs for a range of students in school and pre-professional settings.

An important corollary to our programs for young students is our work with teachers through professional-development workshops that we lead in order to give them the tools and skills needed to incorporate contemporary music into their pedagogy.

Capitalizing on our significant entrepreneurial experience, Alarm Will Sound also offers arts-entrepreneurship seminars in which participants develop ideas for performing-arts projects and create a business plan through workshops led by AWS Managing Director Gavin Chuck and AWS Artistic Director Alan Pierson.

Press



Steve Smith, The New York Times

"...**unusually versatile, reliably exhilarating** new-music ensemble ... Mr. Pierson and his musicians **played with an exactness and verve** that might inspire any composer to dream big."



Alex Ross, The Rest Is Noise

"What I saw of Alarm Will Sound confirms that this ensemble not only possesses **extreme virtuosity** (that we knew) but that it has developed **powerful ideas about how to renovate the concert experience**."



Anthony Tommasini, The New York Times

"...the future of classical music..."



Allan Kozinn, The New York Times

"Alarm Will Sound has become **one of the most vital and original ensembles** on the American music scene."



Kyle MacMillan, The Denver Post

"Alarm Will Sound has grabbed the future of classical music and made it now—**merging styles, erasing boundaries, championing experimentation and obviously having fun along the way**...if classical music is to remain a vital, relevant form that can attract new, young audiences, it needs daring, exciting groups like Alarm Will Sound."



Allan Kozinn, The New York Times

"...as close to being a **rock band** as a chamber orchestra can be."



Allan Ulrich, Financial Times

"...insouciant virtuosity...**a force to reckon with** in contemporary American music."



Entertainment Weekly

"...überhip..."



Boston's Weekly Dig

"...wild precision and brass balls..."



Promotional Images

(Click image to download)



Credit: Carl Socolow



Credit: Cory Weaver



Credit: Justin Bernhaut



Personnel

Alan Pierson, Artistic Director, Conductor, Keyboards
Erin Lesser, Flutes
Christa Robinson, Oboe
Bill Kalinkos, Clarinets
Elisabeth Stimpert, Clarinets
Michael Harley, Bassoon, Voice
Matt Marks, Horn, Keyboards, Voice, Composer
Jason Price, Trumpet
Michael Clayville, Trombone
Christopher Thompson, Percussion
Matt Smallcomb, Percussion
John Orfe, Piano, Composer
Caleb Burhans, Violin, Viola, Voice, Guitar, Composer
Courtney Orlando, Violin, Voice, Keyboards
Stefan Freund, Cello, Composer
Miles Brown, Double Bass, Electric Bass
Nigel Maister, Staging Director
Jason Varvaro, Production Manager
Gavin Chuck, Managing Director, Composer



Technical Requirements

AWS will need access to secure dressing rooms during rehearsals, sound check, and performance. The dressing rooms should be able to accommodate 20 musicians and their instruments. Performers should be able to leave their instruments and belongings in a secure location during and between rehearsals.

Water, coffee, and light snacks should be available in the dressing rooms or green room for the rehearsals and concert. Dinner for the company (including 5 vegetarian, 1 vegan, and 2 glutenfree meals) must be provided between the dress rehearsal and performance.

AWS will need a sound technician, and lighting technician at the rehearsal, dress rehearsal, and performance. Amplification may include the following: Microphones for strings (5 DPA provided), and up to 20 other instrumental microphones as needed in consultation with house engineer.