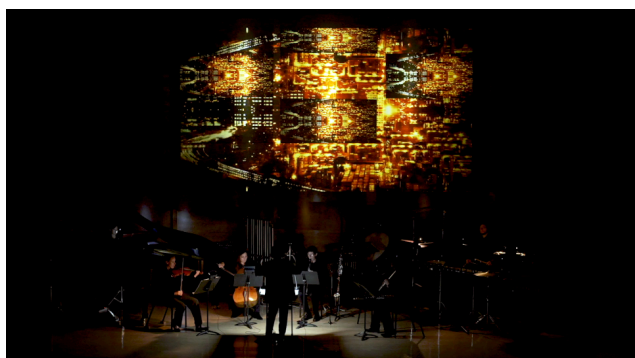


Twist on a Classic: ENSEMBLE/PARALLAX premieres video and music works in their fifth season

Providence dwellers Peyman Farzinpour and his wife Nara Shahbazyan are the quintessential 21st century musicians. In addition to managing very busy performing and teaching schedules, Farzinpour and Shahbazyan are the co-founders of ENSEMBLE/PARALLAX, a New England music ensemble now in its fifth season.



In its first four seasons, ENSEMBLE/PARALLAX commissioned and premiered more than two dozen compositions and multimedia works, as well as numerous US and regional premieres of new compositions. The group is considered a champion of original composition and video art premieres on the regional and national stage.

For their upcoming season, ENSEMBLE/PARALLAX will present three distinct programs of new music and original video art. Starting on September 26 at Sapinsley Hall at Rhode Island College, they will perform “Le voci sottovetro” and “Infinito Nero,” two works by Italian contemporary composer Salvatore Sciarrino, and a work by Patricia Alessandrini titled “Nachtgewächse.”

“This is a particularly captivating program, which we are very excited about,” says Farzinpour. “It not only encompasses the themes of night, darkness, silence and madness, but also connects the music of the crazy and brilliant late 16th century Italian composer Gesualdo da Venosa, which Sciarrino has captured brilliantly in his resetting of some of his madrigals with the intense music of Sciarrino himself and Patricia Alessandrini, and the multimedia created by German artist Wolfgang Lehmann is incredibly beautiful.”

Each concert is an immersive and intimate experience, and each piece of music is accompanied by a work of video art.

“As far as I know, we are the only new music group in the world that is actively commissioning video artists for every single piece of music we perform,” Farzinpour explains. “In addition to commissioning new musical works, we commission a video artist to create something for each piece of music for every concert. The process is the opposite than that of film music, where the film footage exists first and the music follows. In our case the music exists first, and the film follows the music.” ENSEMBLE /

PARALLAX reviews submissions from video artists worldwide as it seeks an artistically appropriate match for the piece in question. Sometimes the artist is present at a performance, other times the work is submitted remotely and the performance coordinated by a local video artist.

The program nearest to Farzinpour's heart is their spring offering, which will be performed April 24, 2020 at McVinney Auditorium in PVD. This program features the chamber opera *Island of Peoples* by composer and Berklee professor Gabriele Vanoni, and a work by Farzinpour entitled "Intolleranza" - an homage to composer Luigi Nono's opera "Intolleranza 1960."

"We premiered *Island of Peoples* last year in New York City with great success," says Farzinpour. "Vanoni fashions the libretto after three immigrants who went to Ellis Island: a Jewish Holocaust survivor, an Armenian Genocide survivor and an Italian immigrant. He received the recorded interviews of these immigrants from the archives of the Ellis Island Museum and incorporated their stories right into the libretto. We feel this a very appropriate time for this piece, with respect to what is happening not just in this country, but in so many places around the world. And yet, when Gabriele and I first spoke about this collaboration, we agreed that we didn't want to project any political angle; we leave it up to the audience to take away what they will." Video artist Malo Lacroix was chosen to create the multimedia for this program.

Highlights of E/P's fifth season include residencies at Syracuse University and Middlesex Community College, as well as performances in Providence, Boston, Philadelphia and at Brooklyn's premiere contemporary music and multimedia venue, National Sawdust.

ENSEMBLE / PARALLAX performs Thu, Sep 26 at 7pm at Sapinsley Hall at Rhode Island College. For more information, ensembleparallax.com