

The music of Mason Bates fuses innovative orchestral writing, imaginative narrative forms, the harmonies of jazz and the rhythms of techno. Frequently performed by orchestras large and small, his symphonic music has been the first to receive widespread acceptance for its expanded palette of electronic sounds, and it is championed by leading conductors such as Riccardo Muti, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Leonard Slatkin. He has become a visible advocate for bringing new music to new spaces, whether through institutional partnerships such as his residency with the Chicago Symphony, or through his classical/DJ project *Mercury Soul*, which has transformed spaces ranging from commercial clubs to Frank Gehry-designed concert halls into exciting, hybrid musical events drawing over a thousand people.

Carnegie Hall's 2012-13 season opens with Riccardo Muti leading the Chicago Symphony in *Alternative Energy*, an 'energy symphony' that spans four movements and hundreds of years. Premiered last season to rave reviews, the work subsequently toured California and receives its Canadian premiere in February by the Toronto Symphony. A new violin concerto for Anne Akiko Meyers and the Pittsburgh Symphony premieres in December under the baton of Leonard Slatkin, and the Pittsburgh Symphony will perform many of Bates' works as he serves as Composer of the Year.

This season, the Houston Ballet premieres a major new ballet to *The B-Sides*, a dance suite that drops into five surreal landscapes that has been performed around the country since its San Francisco Symphony premiere. And the Phoenix Symphony presents two of his works this season — *Desert Transport*, which conjures a helicopter trip over the Arizona landscape, and a new song cycle for soprano and orchestra. While Bates often performs the electronica onstage with orchestras, dozens of repeat performances of his symphonic music happen without him — demonstrating how electronics can act as a new section in the orchestra with little logistical effort. A good example is *Mothership*, which premiered at the Sydney Opera House by the YouTube Symphony to an online audience of 1.8 million: it will appear on symphonic programs across the country this season.

Many purely acoustic works complement his diverse catalogue, such as *Sirens*, an *a cappella* work touring with the superstar chorus Chanticleer. The solo piano work *White Lies for Lomax*, commissioned by Tanglewood Music Center, won the Van Cliburn Composers Invitational and is heard regularly on recitals. A new string quartet premiered by the Del Sol Quartet at the 2012 Cabrillo Festival receives its Bay Area premiere this December. A great deal of his music has been performed by the musicians of Young Concert Artists, the acclaimed New York organization where he served as composer-in-residence.

Bringing classical music to new audiences is a central part of Bates' activities as a curator, be it through residencies with institutions such as the Chicago Symphony's MusicNOW series, or in alternative spaces with *Mercury Soul*. A collaboration with director Anne Patterson and Maestro Benjamin Shwartz, *Mercury Soul* embeds sets of classical music into a fluid evening of DJing and immersive stagecraft. Sold-out performances from San Francisco's famed Mezzanine club to Miami's New World Symphony have brought a new vision of the listening experience to widespread audiences, and this season it returns to Chicago's Metro with members of the Chicago Symphony, as well as to Pittsburgh's Static. For more info, go to www.masonbates.com.