



Christopher
ROUSE

Seeing

Kabir Padavali

Talise Trevigne, Soprano

Orion Weiss, Piano

Albany Symphony

David Alan Miller



Christopher Rouse (b. 1949)

Seeing • Kabir Padavali

Christopher Rouse is one of America's most prominent composers. Winner of the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for his *Trombone Concerto* and a 2002 GRAMMY® for his *Concert de Gaudi*, Rouse has created a body of work perhaps unequalled in its expressive intensity. *The New York Times* has called it "some of the most memorable music around."

Born in Baltimore in 1949, Rouse developed an early interest in both classical and popular music. He graduated from the Oberlin Conservatory and Cornell University, numbering among his principal teachers George Crumb and Karel Husa. He taught composition at the Eastman School of Music for two decades and currently teaches composition at The Juilliard School.

His music has been played by every major orchestra in the U.S. and by numerous ensembles overseas, including the Berlin Philharmonic, the London and BBC Symphony Orchestras, and the Sydney, Singapore, and Toronto Symphonies. Recent highlights include the premieres of his *Oboe Concerto* by the Minnesota Orchestra (2009); his *Symphony No. 3* by the St. Louis Symphony (2011); *Heimdal's Trumpet* by the Chicago Symphony (2012); *Supplica* by the Pittsburgh Symphony (2014); and *Odna Zhizn* (2010), *Prospero's Rooms* (2013), *Thunderstuck* and *Symphony No. 4* (both 2014) by the New York Philharmonic. Soloists for whom he has composed works include Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax, Evelyn Glennie, Cho-Liang Lin, and Sharon Isbin.

Rouse was the Baltimore Symphony's Composer-in-Residence from 1986 to 1989 and more recently was named the Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence at the New York Philharmonic, serving in that capacity from 2012 until 2015.

Christopher Rouse is published by Boosey & Hawkes.

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Seeing (1998)

Seeing owes its nature to a series of seemingly disparate threads that came together in an almost serendipitous fashion. Commissioned for Emanuel Ax and the New York Philharmonic through funds generously provided by Lillian Barbash, *Seeing* was conceived from the start as something other than a traditional piano concerto. In early discussions with Emanuel Ax, I discovered that he had never publicly performed (and had no future plans to perform) the *Piano Concerto* of Robert Schumann, a work he deeply loved but which he felt, due to his extraordinary modesty, unable to do justice to. I immediately resolved to include snippets of the Schumann concerto in my score as something of a "private joke."

The next step in the work's evolution came as I searched for a title that would betoken the piece's somewhat free form. In the summer of 1997, while browsing through discs in my collection of rock music, I came across an album by the San Francisco band Moby Grape, a record to which I had not listened for some years. As *Moby Grape* '69 began to play, I perused the song titles on the jacket and was struck by the name of the final track, a song by one of the group's guitarists, Skip Spence. The song was entitled *Seeing*, and I was struck by the combination of simplicity and vision symbolized by this title. I had the name for my work.

Some months later I was browsing in a bookstore and came across a book detailing the current activities of various figures in the rock music world of the 1960s. As I came upon the Moby Grape entry, I discovered that Skip Spence had for some time been institutionalized as irretrievably psychotic, and this led me to reflect further upon Robert Schumann's own institutionalization for psychosis. These strands now came together and my conception for the composition took form. How do the mentally ill "see" – not in the purely ocular sense but rather in the psychological and spiritual sense? How do they interpret what they see? And how can a representation of these "images" be translated into sound?

The result is a piece in four connected sections (fast-slow-fast-slow) lasting approximately twenty-eight minutes in which the Schumann *Concerto* continually reasserts itself in a variety of guises, some easily identifiable and some distorted. Virtually all of the material in *Seeing* owes its genesis to the Schumann in some way, though often the metamorphoses of Schumann are so extreme as to be unrecognizable. The four sections of the work could be said to correspond in the most general way to the form of the standard concerto, though the large slow movement is placed last, after an impassioned *allegro*, a disembodied and disoriented *adagio intermezzo*, and an hallucinatory *scherzo*. It is important for the listener to realize that *Seeing* is not a narratively programmatic piece. There is no "protagonist" – real or imagined – and no series of events is depicted in the music. Instead, it was my plan to explore the notion of "sanity" via swings back and forth between extremes of consonance and dissonance, stability and instability. My intent was to compose a unified and coherent work about confusion. *Seeing* does not "take a stand" upon mental illness as a social cause; rather, I wished to concern myself with the tragic toll such afflictions can take upon individual persons and those who care for them.

Seeing is scored for an orchestra consisting of three flutes, three oboes (3rd doubling English horn), three clarinets (3rd doubling bass clarinet), three bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, celesta, timpani, percussion (three players), and strings. The battery consists of snare drum, bass drum, tenor drum, bongo, two brake drums, tam-tam, two suspended cymbals, Chinese cymbal, triangle, cowbell, guiro, slapstick, claves, cabasa, two wood blocks, rute, sandpaper blocks, maracas, and hammer.

Completed in Pittsford, New York on October 31, 1998, *Seeing* is dedicated to Emanuel Ax.

Kabir Padavali (1998)

Commissioned by the Minnesota Orchestra, *Kabir Padavali* ("Kabir Songbook") was composed for soprano Dawn Upshaw. I completed it on January 12, 1998 at my home in Pittsford, New York.

The great Indian poet Kabir is believed to have lived between 1398 and 1448. I first encountered his poetry in the early 1970s when my study of North Indian classical music yielded numerous songs set to Kabir texts. At that time (1972), I composed a work for soprano and orchestra with the same title as this; however, it was never performed. I resolved then that at some time in the future I would have another "go" at these wonderful poems, and the Minnesota Orchestra commission happily provided me with the opportunity.

I started afresh and – working from English translations by Linda Hess and Rabindranath Tagore – selected six poems from scratch. I elected to set them in Hindi, a language that fortunately sounds more often than not reasonably similar to the way it looks, and I owe my deepest thanks to Linda Hess and Douglas Brooks for their help in preparing and providing me with transliterations from Hindi. As Kabir neither read nor wrote, his work has depended on centuries of oral tradition for its sustenance; this has naturally led to certain textual problems, and without the help of Ms. Hess and Mr. Brooks, I would have found it impossible to compose this work. Their insights into Kabir's *œuvre* and the world in which it was created was also of enormous value.

It was my goal to present a range of Kabir's concerns as a religious poet. Because of its extraordinary beauty, his ecstatic poetry served as the source of the lion's share of my material (songs nos. 1, 2, 6, and to some extent 5). However, Kabir's humorous side can be discerned in his impish, allegorical text for no. 3, and no. 4 offers one of his sociological rants against the hypocrisy he found all around him. Unlike my 1972 score, this *Kabir Padavali* does not seek to provide a "musicologically correct" sound world as accompaniment to Kabir's words. There are no specific ragas employed, nor is there an attempt to reproduce Hindu vocal styles in the piece.

However, I *have* attempted – particularly near the beginning and end of this score – to evoke the North Indian sound world in a more general fashion through the use of drones and via several oboe solos, the oboe possessing a sound not dissimilar to that of the Indian *shahnai*. My use of an accordion also represents an effort to parallel the sound, to some extent, of the Indian harmonium.

The soprano soloist is joined by an orchestra made up of two flutes (2nd doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets (parts in A), two bassoons, four horns (parts in F), two trumpets (parts in C), three trombones, tuba,

celesta, accordion, harp, timpani, percussion (3 players), and strings. The percussion section must play bass drum, maracas, claves, slapstick, suspended cymbal, Chinese cymbal, Chinese opera gong, tam-tam, antique cymbals, glockenspiel, chimes, and xylophone. Offstage percussion instruments include another bass drum, another set of chimes, another glockenspiel, plus castanets and ratchet.

Kabir Padavali is dedicated to my son Adrian and lasts approximately twenty-eight minutes.

Christopher Rouse

Kabir Padavali

1. *Bijak śhabda* 69

jantrī jantra anūpam bājai / vāke aṣṭ gagan mukh gājai
tūhī bājai tūhī gājai / tūhī liye kar dolai
ek sabda meṇ rāga chhatīsau / anahad bānī bolai
mukh ke nāla sravan ke tumbā / satguru sāj banāyā
jibhyā tār nāsikā carai / māyā mom lagāyā
gagan mandil meṇ bhayo ujjārā / ulā pher lagāyā
kahaiṇ kabīr jan bhaye vivekī / jin jantrī man lāyā

The musician plays a peerless instrument
with eight sky-mouths thundering.
Only you are played, only you
thunder, your hand alone
runs up and down.
In one sound, thirty-six ragas, speaking
an endless word.
The mouth's a shaft,
The ear a sounding gourd—
The Satguru made the instrument.
The tongue a string,
The nose a peg—
He rubs on the wax of Maya.
Light bursts in the sky-temple
At a sudden
reversal.
Kabir says, clarity comes
when the musician lives
in your heart.

2. Tagore 50

muralī bajat akhaṇḍ sadā se / tahāṇ prem jhanakārā hai
prem hadd tajī jab bhāī / satt lok kī hadd punī āī
uthat sugandh mahā adhikāī / jāko vār va pārā hai
koṭī bhān rāg ko rūpā / bīn sat dhun bajai anūpā

The flute of the infinite is played without ceasing,
and its sound is love.
When love renounces all limits,
it reaches truth.
How widely the fragrance spreads!
It has no end,
nothing stands in its way.
The form of this melody is bright like a million suns:
incomparably sounds the vina,
the vina of truth.

4 3. *Bījak śabda* 55

nar ko ghāḍhas dekhahu āī / kachhu akath kathā hai bhāī
siṅh sārdu ek har jotin / sīkas boin dhānā
ban ko bhaluiyā chākhur pherain / chhāgar bhaye kisānā
chherī bāghahi byāh hot hai / mangal gāvai gāī
ban ke rojh dhari dāij dīnho / go lokande jāī
kāgā kāpaḍ dhovan lāge / bakulā krīpahī dāntā
mākhī mūd muḍavan lāgī / hamahūn jav barātā
kahain kabīr suno ho santo / jo yah pad arthāvai
soī pandit soī gyātā / soī bhakt kahāvai

Brother, see what comforts man—
it's an untellable story.
Lion and tiger are yoked to a plow
sowing rice in a barren field.
The wild bear is pulling weeds,
the billy goat runs the farm.
The nanny goat married a lion
while a cow sang wedding songs.
The dowry was an antelope,
the bridesmaid was a lizard.
The crow washed all the laundry
while the heron gnashed its teeth.
The fly shaved its head, shouting
I must join the marriage party!
Kabir says, can you
figure out this
poetry?
If so, I'll call you
scholar, genius,
devotee.

5 4. *Bījak śabda* 4

santo dekhat jag baurānā /
sānch kahoṇ to māran dhāvai / jhūṭhe jag patiyānā
nemī dekhā dharamī dekhā / prāt karai asanānā
ātam māri pakhānahi pūjai / un meṇ kachhu nahin gyānā
bahutak dekhā pīr auliya / paḍhai kitāb kurānā
kai murīd tadabīr batāvai / un meṇ uhai jo gyānā
āsan marī ḍimbh ghar baiṭhai / man meṇ bahut gumānā
pītar pāthar pūjan lāgai / tīrath garv bhulānā
ṭopī pahire mālā pahire / chhāp tilak anumānā
sākhī sabdahi gāvat bhūle / ātam khabarī na jānā
hindu kahe mohī rām piyārā / turk kahe rahimānā
āpas meṇ doū lari mūye / marm na kāhū jānā
ghar ghar mantar det phirat hai / mahimā ke abhimānā
guru ke sahī sikhya sab būḍe / ant kāl pachhitānā
kahai kabīr suno ho santo / ī sab bharam bhulānā
ketik kahoṇ kahā nahin mānai / sahajai sahaḍ samānā

Saints, I see the world is mad.
If I tell the truth they rush to beat me,
if I lie they trust me.
I've seen the pious Hindus, rule-followers,
early morning bath-takers—
killing souls; they worship rocks.
They know nothing.
I've seen plenty of Muslim teachers, holy men
reading their holy books
and teaching their pupils techniques.
They know just as much.
And posturing yogis, hypocrites,
hearts crammed with pride,
praying to brass, to stones, reeling
with pride in their pilgrimage,
fixing their caps and their prayer-beads,
painting their brow-marks and their arm-marks,

braying their hymns and their couplets,
reeling. They never heard of soul.
The Hindu says Ram is the Beloved,
the Turk says Rahim.
Then they kill each other.
No one knows the secret.
They buzz their mantras from house to house,
puffed with pride.
The pupils drown along with their gurus.
In the end they're sorry.
Kabir says, listen saints:
they're all deluded!
Whatever I say, nobody gets it.
It's too simple.

6 5. Tagore 92

charkha chale surat birahin kā /
kāyā nagarī banī ati sundar / mahal banā chetan kā
surat bhānvarī hot gagan meṇ / pīṭhā gyān ratan kā
mihīn sūt birahin kātain / mānjhā prem bhagatī kā
kahain kabīr suno bhāī sadhu / mālā gūntho din rain kā
piyā mor aihain pagā rakhihain / āṇsū bheṭ dehaṇ nain kā

The woman who is parted from her lover
spins at the spinning wheel.
The city of the body arises in its beauty,
and within it the palace of the mind has been built.
The wheel of love revolves in the sky,
and the seat is made of the jewels of knowledge:
What subtle threads the woman weaves,
and makes them fine with love and reverence!
Kabir says: I am weaving the garland of day and night.
When my Lover comes and touches me with His feet,
I shall offer Him my tears.

7 6. Tagore 97

sāheb ham meṇ sāheb tum meṇ / jaise prānā bīj meṇ
mat kar bandā gumān dīl meṇ / khoj dekh le tan meṇ
koṭī sūr jahan karate jhīlamil / nīl sindh sohe gagan meṇ
sab tāp mīṭ jāy dehī ke / nirmal hoy baīṭhī jag meṇ
anahad ghanṭā bajai mṛidangā / tan sukh lehi piyār meṇ
bin pānī lāgi jahan barāṣhā / motī dekhi nadīn meṇ
ek prem brahmāṇḍ chhāy rahyo hai / samajhe birale pūrā
andh bhedī kahā samajhenge / gyān ke ghar taiñ dūrā
hans ubāran dukh nibāran / avāgaman mīṭai chhan meṇ

Notes on transliteration:

Long marks indicate long vowels (“ā” = English “ah”; “a” without diacritical mark = English “uh”; similarly with “ī/î” and “ū/u.”). Lines are divided to show normal poetic structure, with the sign / indicating metrical half-lines. Singers sometimes add extra short “a” after a consonant (e.g., “anūpama”), but these are inconsistent and are not shown here.

The main deviation from standard transliteration is in representing the English sounds “ch” and “sh.” There are four such sounds in Hindi: च, छ, श, and ष. They would strictly be rendered as c, ch, ś, and ṣ, leading English readers to mispronounce them. In this transliteration they are rendered as ch, chh, śh, and ṣh. In addition, ञ is rendered in its Hindi pronunciation, “gy” rather than as Sanskrit “jñ”. Finally, the various nasal sounds, strictly rendered by a variety of letters and diacritical marks, are here all represented either by “n” (when combined with a consonant) or by “ṇ” (when combined with a vowel).

The language is an older Hindi, not modern standard Hindi. Spelling and forms are irregular and may vary in different printed versions.

Hindi editions from which these texts are taken:
Kabīr-Bijak, ed. Shukdev Singh, 1972.
[1, 3, 4] [used with permission]
[2, 5, 6] *Kabīr* by Hazariprasad Dvivedi, 1942.

The Lord is in me, the Lord is in you,
as life is in every seed.
O servant!
put false pride away, and seek for Him within you.
A million suns are ablaze with light,
The sea of blue spreads in the sky,
The fever of life is stilled, and all stains are washed away
when I sit in the midst of that world.
Hark to the unstruck bells and drums!
Take your delight in with love!
Rains pour down without water,
and the rivers are the streams of light.
Our love it is that pervades the whole world,
few there are who know it fully:
They are blind who hope to see it by the light of reason,
that reason which is the cause of separation—
the House of Reason is very far away!
How blessed is Kabir, that amidst this great joy
he sings within his own vessel.
It is the music of the meeting of soul with soul;
It is the music of the forgetting of sorrows;
It is the music that transcends all coming in and going forth.

Translations by Linda Hess (1, 3 and 4) (reproduced by kind permission) and Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) (2, 5 and 6)

We are indebted to Linda Hess, a well-known scholar and translator of Kabir, for her indispensable and painstaking assistance in preparing the transliterations of the Hindi texts and for allowing her English translations (from *The Bijak of Kabir* by Linda Hess and Shukdev Singh, Oxford University Press, 2002) to be reproduced in this booklet. Her latest book is *Bodies of Song: Kabir Oral Traditions and Performative Worlds in North India* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

Talise Trevigne



Photo: Kingmond Young

While still a student, Talise Trevigne made her operatic début under the direction of Julius Rudel in *La traviata* and *Don Giovanni* at the Aspen Music Festival. She has performed principal rôles in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, *Les Malheurs d'Orphée*, Handel's *Deidamia*, *Les dialogues des Carmélites*, *The Tempest* and *Der Rosenkavalier*. She is equally at home on the concert stage, where her orchestral and recital performances have included Canteloube's *Chants d'Auvergne*, Phédon in Satie's *Socrate*, Mahler's *Second Symphony*, Barber's *Knoxville, Summer of 1915* and *Prayers of Kierkegaard*. She has also performed rare works of Maurice Delage, Purcell and Nin-Culmell in New York. She continues to be praised for her portrayals of many principal rôles, including Violetta, Mimi, Juliette, Gilda and Manon. A champion of new music, she created the rôle of Pip the Cabin Boy in the world première of Jake Heggie's *Moby-Dick* with Dallas Opera in her company début. She made her Australian opera début as “The Beloved” in the world première of Liza Lim's *The Navigator* and reprised this demanding rôle at Moscow's Chekhov International Arts Festival (June 2009) and at the Paris Bastille (December 2009).

Orion Weiss



Photo: Scott Melvoge

The young American pianist Orion Weiss has performed with the major American orchestras, including the Chicago Symphony, Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and New York Philharmonic. His impressive list of awards includes the Gilmore Young Artist Award, an Avery Fisher Career Grant, the Gina Bachauer Scholarship at The Juilliard School and the Mieczysław Munz Scholarship. A native of Lyndhurst, OH, Weiss attended the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied with Paul Schenly, Daniel Shapiro, Sergei Babayan, Kathryn Brown, and Edith Reed. In February 1999 he made his Cleveland Orchestra début performing Liszt's *Piano Concerto No. 1*. In March 1999, with less than 24 hours' notice, he stepped in to replace André Watts for a performance of Shostakovich's *Piano Concerto No. 2* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. He was immediately invited to return to the Orchestra for a performance of the Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto* in October 1999. In 2004, he graduated from The Juilliard School, where he studied with Emanuel Ax.

Albany Symphony



The Albany Symphony was founded in 1930 by John F. Carabella, who was born in Rome in 1885, and was a favourite pupil of Pietro Mascagni, composer of *Cavalleria rusticana*. He came to America in 1915 to become organist and choirmaster at St. Bernard's Church in Cohoes. The Orchestra has evolved artistically under the innovative leadership of music directors Carabella, Rudolf Thomas, Ole Windingstad, Edgar Curtis, Julius Hegyi, Geoffrey Simon, and David Alan Miller. The last of these, former Associate Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, was appointed Music Director and Conductor in June 1992 and has established himself as one of the nation's foremost conductors. The Albany Symphony fulfills its mission by performing, commissioning, and recording the work of established and emerging American composers while respecting and bringing new vision to time-honored classical music. The last few years have been a time of dramatic growth and success for the orchestra. In 2011, the Albany Symphony was invited to participate in the inaugural season of Spring for Music, a festival celebrating innovative programming by American orchestras, at Carnegie Hall. In 2013, the Albany Symphony was the only orchestra to appear for a second year in the festival. In 2014, the orchestra's recording of John Corigliano's *Conjurer* won a GRAMMY® Award. The Albany Symphony has received more ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming than any other orchestra in America, 26 to date, including the John S. Edwards Award for Strongest Commitment to New American Music in 2013 and 2014.

David Alan Miller



David Alan Miller has held the position of Music Director of the Albany Symphony since 1992. Through exploration of unusual repertoire, educational programming, community outreach and recording initiatives, he has reaffirmed the Albany Symphony's reputation as the nation's leading champion of American symphonic music and one of its most innovative orchestras. Accolades include Columbia University's Ditson Conductor's Award, the 2001 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming, and, in 1999, ASCAP's first-ever Leonard Bernstein Award for Outstanding Educational Programming. Frequently in demand as a guest conductor, David Alan Miller has worked with most of America's major orchestras. Overseas appearances include major European orchestras in Berlin, Barcelona, Prague, Dresden, Hong Kong and Singapore. Miller is highly regarded as a champion and interpreter of American music, new and old. His extensive discography includes a GRAMMY® Award-winning recording of works by John Corigliano, as well as recent recordings of music by John Harbison, Kamran Ince, Aaron J. Kernis, George Tsontakis and Michael Torke.



A note about the cover artist

Known for his almost exclusive use of cats as his inspiration, the English artist Louis Wain (1860-1939) flourished during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. During the gradual progress of his schizophrenia, Wain's cats went from naturalistic depictions to the highly stylized and disturbing images that typified his later work, of which the cover painting is an example.

Christopher
ROUSE
(b. 1949)

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|----------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Seeing (1998)* | 31:31 |
| | Kabir Padavali (1998)** | 32:05 |
| 2 | No. 1 | 6:16 |
| 3 | No. 2 | 4:04 |
| 4 | No. 3 | 3:24 |
| 5 | No. 4 | 5:46 |
| 6 | No. 5 | 2:56 |
| 7 | No. 6 | 9:39 |

WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS

Talise Trevigne, Soprano**

Orion Weiss, Piano*

Albany Symphony

David Alan Miller

English transliterations and translations of the Hindi sung texts can be found inside the booklet.

Recorded at the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC), Troy, New York, on 2nd June, 2013 (track 1), and at Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, New York, on 11th February, 2013 (tracks 2-7)

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Cover painting: *Kaleidoscope Cats VI* by Louis Wain (1860-1939)
(Bethlem Royal Hospital Museum, Beckenham, Kent, UK/
Bridgeman Images)



AMERICAN CLASSICS

Winner of a Pulitzer Prize and a GRAMMY® Award, Christopher Rouse is one of America's most prominent composers of orchestral music, creating a body of work perhaps unequalled in its emotional intensity. Conceived from the start as differing from a traditional piano concerto, *Seeing* brings together seemingly disparate elements to explore the notion of 'sanity' through the music of Robert Schumann and Skip Spence, swinging between extremes of consonance and dissonance, stability and instability, to create a disorientating and hallucinatory work seen through the lens of mental illness. *Kabir Padavali* or 'Kabir Songbook' presents a range of the great Indian poet's religious concerns, from extraordinarily beautiful ecstasy to impishly humorous allegories.

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Playing
Time:
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