The Starry Horn

Bruce Heim, horn

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1	Esa-Pekka Salonen (b. 1958) - Hornmusic 1 (1976)	8:09
	George Tsontakis (b. 1951) - Gemini (1996/1998) for Horn, Violin, Cello, and Piano	(18:19)
2	I. Light (but darkly) (attacca)	8:57
3	II. Spacious; liquid and floating	9:22
4	Sebastian Currier (b. 1959) - Flow (2013) for Flute, Clarinet, Horn, Violin, Cello, and Piano	18:08
	Total Time:	44:39

Bruce Heim, Horn
Naomi Oliphant, Piano, Professor Emeritus, University of Louisville
Joanna Goldstein, Piano, Professor Emeritus, Indiana University Southeast
John McFadden-Talbot (Violin, Tsontakis), Assistant Concertmaster, Louisville Orchestra
Maria Semes (Violin, Currier), Viola, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra
Nicholas Finch, Principal Cello, Louisville Orchestra
Kathy Karr, Principal Flute, Louisville Orchestra
Matthew Nelson, Professor of Clarinet, University of Louisville

Special thanks: Craig McInnis (cover art), Christopher Doane and Teresa Reed (former Deans, University of Louisville School of Music), the late Benjamin Franklin and the Chamber Music Society of Louisville (Currier commission), Nathan James (Mastering Engineer, Vault Mastering Studios, Inc.)

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Hornmusic No. 1 by **Esa-Pekka Salonen** is a brilliant work by a composer-performer. Written in 1976, it is one of his early works. Salonen was trained first and foremost as a horn player, studying with the great Finnish pedagogue, Holger Fransman. He undertook conducting out of necessity, in order to help his group, *Korvut auki (Ears Up),* learn difficult new works more efficiently. In addition to studying horn and conducting at the Sibelius Academy, he had studied composition with Einojuhani Rautavaara. Hornmusic No. 1 was Salonen's first published score, and was the piece he submitted to Rautavaara when he asked to study with him.

The conducting career of Esa-Pekka Salonen took him to Los Angeles, where he began his tenure as Music Director at the age of 34. At the time, he was considered remarkably young for such an important appointment. He served in that capacity until 2009, when he was named Conductor Laureate, the organization's first recipient of that title. He famously took a sabbatical in 2000 to concentrate on composing. Even as he continues to be one of the most highly respected conductors in the world, he has managed to devote more time and effort to music composition. He was awarded the University of Louisville's prestigious Grawemeyer Award in 2012 for his Violin Concerto, and numerous other honors and awards have followed. Other works featuring horn by Salonen include his Concert Étude, for unaccompanied horn (2000) and his Horn Concerto (2024-25)

(Notes by Bruce Heim)

Within two years of receiving the 2005 Grawemeyer Award, widely recognized as the most prestigious composition prize internationally, for his Violin Concerto No. 2, **George Tsontakis** was awarded the world's richest prize for a composer, the Charles Ives Living, given by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The three-year term of the Ives Living was from 2007 to 2010. Additional honors include Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards in both chamber and orchestral music, the 2002 Berlin Prize and an award for lifetime achievement from the American Academy. George Tsontakis has served as the Composer-in-Residence for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Albany Symphony ("Meet The Composer"). Mr. Tsontakis studied at Juilliard with Roger Sessions and has taught at the Aspen Music Festival and School since 1976. He founded the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble and was director from 1991 to 1998. He currently serves as Distinguished Composer-in-Residence at Bard College Conservatory. Mr. Tsontakis's music has been released on a number of record labels.

Composer Notes for *Gemini*:
"Gemini (1996/1998) is one of a few works of mine created in two parts; these parts are often equal in length as well as in importance to the whole, hence the name "Gemini." However, this title is a bit tongue-in-cheek as the "twin" parts are anything but identical—more like mirror images seen with some distortion. The antecedent is warmer, yet formally closed and worldly, especially in the fast and taut episode. The subsequent part embodies oneness and is cooler and open. As in several of my works, the very end does not intend to bring closure, but rather represents a comma where questions just begin to form."

Sebastian Currier was awarded the University of Louisville's Grawemeyer Award in 2007 for his composition, *Static*, which is scored for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano. That chamber music instrumentation, capable of a broad palate of timbres, is known as a "Pierrot Ensemble" after the iconic composition by Arnold Schoenberg. I'm grateful that Dr. Currier agreed to the request of Dean Christopher Doane of the University of Louisville to add a horn to the "Pierrot Ensemble" combination for *Flow*. I'm also grateful that the late Benjamin Franklin provided funding to commission *Flow* for the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Chamber Music Society of Louisville.

Composer Notes for *Flow*:
"In evolutionary biology it was originally assumed that species evolve very gradually, like the physical landscape evolved. Mountains gradually formed over eons or continents drifted apart imperceptibly. It seemed logical that species were formed in a parallel way. But further discoveries pointed to a different pattern: long stretches of stasis followed by concentrated periods of intense, active change. This pattern is known as punctuated equilibrium. Since music unfolds in time and, in a more general sense, ideas within a piece "evolve," this notion caught my attention as a way to put together music in time. It also engaged with one of the primary dialogues in music of the past half decade: minimalism versus, if you will, maximalism. The idea of punctuated equilibrium seemed to me like an invitation to combine these two points of view, which are often perceived as somehow antithetical. In my piece, stable, repetitive patterns are abruptly interrupted, leading to other stable patterns, and so on. This process defines the entire opening section. As the piece unfolds, however, this structure itself becomes looser. In the final section, the materials from the opening return, but this time, instead of abrupt interruptions ushering in each successive pattern, one pattern dovetails with the next, each idea dissembled as the next gradually forms, hence the name of the piece, *Flow*."