

Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica - Quintet

Global jazz and exotic chamber music

In the same way a *chef de cuisine* runs a kitchen, percussionist Brian O'Neill leads a team of five musical creators who deftly collaborate on instruments foreign and domestic to form modernist delicacies for hungry, curious listeners. From the high arts of jazz and chamber music to adaptations of mid-century exotica and pop art, the quintet version of Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica renders O'Neill's original compositions and curious adaptations of Bach, Gershwin, Shostakovich and John Adams into cinematic, layered music for armchair travelers ready to journey off road.

"If John Zorn is an exotica Picasso, O'Neill is his Georges-Braque counterpart in cubism's transposition to music." - AllAboutJazz

While the quintet eschews most of the musical forms, rhythms, and styles of the 1950s exotica sound that inspired O'Neill, it fully embraces the unique genre's love of escapism, whether through deliberate, out-of-context use of global sounds or through jazz improvisation that doesn't swing and deliberately imitates the rhythm of a skipping record. On the listener's plate might be equal parts scratch and sniff, bongos with a fugue, and a cat fight at a piano recital. On the stage, the ensemble skillfully negotiates detailed compositions and arrangements of classical works while relying on listening and instinct to drive passionate improvisation.

"Anything but straightforward"
Washington Post

"Evocative exotica"
Boston Globe

"Top 10 CDs for 2011"
The Huffington Post

"Serious jazz and chamber music"
Boston Herald

"Incredible musicianship"
Downbeat

"2012 Best World Music Act: A rigorous classical-jazz hybrid. Are you listening, Keith Lockhart?"
Boston Phoenix

"No other band on the planet sounds anything remotely like Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica"

Lucid Culture

The sound of the Orchestrotica's quintet also exists in two albums that help form the larger *Exotica for Modern Living Series*, which launched in 2010 with the group's big band ensemble performing its transcriptions of the lost music of Esquivel. In June 2011, the quintet released *Third River Rangoon*, its first interpretation of exotica as a mélange of jazz, classical, and world music. This sound matured with the band's sophomore recording, *Where Here Meets There* (2013), a dichotomous album that introduced even more adventuresome original music on its A-side ("Music from Here") and the group's most sophisticated adaptations to date on its B-side ("Music from There"), the latter including its popular arrangements of Gershwin's three "Piano Preludes." The series has also been lauded for its unique mid-century modern-inspired artwork, and audiophile-grade production quality.

In addition to O'Neill's vibraphone and hand percussion, the quintet features Geni Skendo's bass flute, flute, and *shakuhachi*; the highly stylized classical/jazz bassist Brad Barrett; Tev Stevig on the rare trio of *oud*, *tanbur*, and resonator guitar; and Jeremy Smith who referees the ensemble's interactions and improvisations using a bounty of percussion from marching machines to Arabic frame drums. All the musicians are teaching artists, and the ensemble provides educational programs at the primary school, high school, and collegiate levels.

Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica

Tour History Highlights

Festival Highlights

- Montreal Jazz Festival @ Main Stage (Montreal)
- Wassermusik Festival @ Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin)
- Festival de Mexico @ Teatro de la Ciudad (Mexico City)
- Celebrate Mexico Now @ Pace University (New York, NY)
- Festival Internacional de Nuevos Vientos Ecatepec (Mexico)

Non-Festival Highlights

- Le Poisson Rouge (New York, NY)
- Levitt Pavillion Steelstacks (Bethlehem, PA)
- Barbes, Drom, Shapeshifter Lab (Brooklyn, NY)
- Horizon Concert Series (Flagstaff, AZ)
- Taliesin West, The Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture (Phoenix, AZ)
- The Regatta Bar (Cambridge, MA)
- Bohemian Caverns (Washington, DC)
- Doc's Lab (San Francisco, CA)

I recommend this ensemble on behalf of the Montreal Jazz Festival. We and our massive crowds loved both of their shows, and the big band was very easy to work with despite their large size. Jazzlitz loved their performance's "incredible precision and passion," and Michael Bourne personally told me he loved it as well.

—Marc-André Sarault
Montreal Jazz Festival

Brian's work to transcribe the lost arrangements of Esquivel by hand is nothing short of incredible. Their concert at our festival was fantastic, and I will keep recommending this wonderful project to my peers!

—Claudia Norman, Mexico Now Festival NYC

The Orchestrotica's quintet was fantastic. It was great to see such a good turn out, and hope they'll be back some time.

—Art Valdez, Alvas Showroom Los Angeles, CA

"We heard great things from the crowd and would be happy to have Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica back!"

—Lee Frank, Doc's Lab San Francisco

Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica

Quintet Repertoire

The quintet's focus is on performing original music composed by Artistic Director and composer, Brian O'Neill.

Additionally, the group performs unique adaptations including:

Piano Preludes I, II, III

George Gershwin

"Ritual Fire Dance"

Manuel de Falla

"Arab Dance" (from *The Nutcracker*)

P. Tchaikovsky

"Shen Khar Venakhi" (for bowed vibraphone)

Trad. Georgian chant

"Would You Like Bongos With That Fugue?"
(original work feat. JS Bach's Fugue in G Minor for Violin BWV 1001; Toccata in D Minor BWV 565)

O'Neill, J.S. Bach

Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica

Discography



Where Here Meets There (Nov. 2013) - 12" LP, CD

Global jazz quintet / exotica (vibes,perc,bass flute, bass, oud/tanbur/resonator gtr.)

"Best Albums of 2013"

—Panamerika

"Wonderful!"

—Jazz Weekly

"A timeless magnum opus"

—World Music Report



Third River Rangoon (May 2011) - CD

Global jazz quartet / exotica (vibes,perc,bass flute, bass, oud)

"Top 10 CDs for 2011"

—Huffington Post

"...serious jazz and chamber music..."

—Boston Herald

"...serenely intoxicating..."

—AllAboutJazz



The Unforgettable Sounds of Esquivel (Nov. 2010) - CD

22-pc live big band plays the lost space-age pop of Esquivel

"Top 10 CDs for 2011"

—Huffington Post

"Top CDs of 2010"

—AllAboutJazz

"4 stars...exquisite attention to details..."

—SUNDAY TIMES LONDON

"...incredible musicianship..."

—DOWNBEAT



The Boston Globe



playing in...



www.orchestrotica.com • info@orchestrotica.com • Twitter: @orchestrotica



Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica

Outreach / Education Programs

Contact:

Brian O'Neill

Artistic Director

1.347.482.1775 (w) 1.617.905.9660 (m)

email: info@orchestrotica.com

The Orchestrotica can customize one of these programs or create a new one to work with your school or community based on its unique needs. Feel free to contact me with questions/ideas.

Instrument and ensemble masterclasses

Jr. High / High school / College / Adult

Members of the Orchestrotica can give instrument masterclasses or coaching on percussion (orchestral/hand/marching), flute, and bass. Genres include jazz, classical, and various world and latin styles. Members of the Orchestrotica can also help individuals and ensembles with listening and performance guidance. This is usually prefaced with a demonstration/performance by the Orchestrotica.

Brian's 90 minute demonstration and clinic was fantastic ... showcasing real-world performance scenarios with the use of intriguing combinations of cultural percussion instruments...performances were dynamic and soulful, with well-informed explanations and insightful responses to student questions (and there were many)...these 90 minutes expired way too quickly!

*Dr. Steve Hemphill, Professor of Percussion and Director of Percussion Studies
Northern Arizona University*

Crash and Boom: The Science of Sound (45 min.)

Grades K-2

Through the performance of short excerpts of music, instrument demonstrations, and participatory body percussion, Mr. Ho and his assistant(s) from the **Orchestrotica** will present a basic workshop expanding the knowledge of the sound and science in music using instrument demonstrations and interactive participation from students.

Grades 3-6

Same as above, although these older students will participate in sound creation during the workshop and take part in a basic ensemble using body percussion. Working together, the



1.347.482.1775
info@orchestrotica.com
www.orchestrotica.com
USA Outreach Programs

students will learn how their individual music parts make up a greater collective sound.

A Tambourine Tour of the World

Designed for grades 3 – 12 / Adults

Culture / Geography / Language - Mr. Ho can give a lecture/demonstration the similarities and differences of the tambourine in various cultures including the instrument itself, and it's performance traditions. Older audiences will also learn how an astute performer studies, embraces, and appreciates other cultures to improve his/her own musical vocabulary. They can also see how an artist can draw inspiration for composition by understanding the musical context in which different tambourines are used across different geographies such as the Middle East, India, Europe, the USA, and South America. One of the themes of this workshop is seeing how some musicians are constantly learning from various cultures to enrich their lives and musicianship. For smaller workshops, the students may actively participate and play along.

Partner-Play Workshops for Music Departments (90 min.)

Junior high (7th and 8th grade) band departments

High school band departments

Give students the opportunity to sit side-by-side with professional musicians of the same instrument. The **Orchestrotica** is comprised of professional instrumental musicians and teachers who specialize in a variety of genres of music. Credentials include members of the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and faculty from Berklee College of Music.

Orchestrotica musicians will participate in student rehearsals, offer technical and musical guidance, provide master-class style sectionals, and augment the classroom teacher's instruction with their specialized training in specific instruments and genres. Section leaders from the **Orchestrotica** will be selected to work with the students on sound production, technique, ensemble, and musicianship.

Envisioning your personal artistic identity

Performing arts high schools / College

Mr. Ho and members of the Orchestrotica can speak with ambitious students seeking to pursue a career in the arts and building a personal brand/identity as a musician. This can include education on the "start-up" process of building a new ensemble/program, personal identity in the music world, and non-musical skills relevant to an artist's career.

Languages spoken:

In some situations, outreach programs can be presented partially in foreign languages including Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, and Albanian.



1.347.482.1775
info@orchestrotica.com
www.orchestrotica.com
USA Outreach Programs – Jan '12

Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica (as a quintet)

Production Rider, USA

Contact: Brian O'Neill

Artistic Director

1.347.482.1775 (w) 1.617.905.9660 (m)

email: info@orchestrotica.com

Technical Requirements

*All technical requirements will be advanced
four to six (4-6) weeks before the performance date.*

Sound System

- House provides 12 channel mixer, mics, cables, and stands as specified in stage plot
- House provides Monitor System (5 wedges)

Engineering Requirements

- Professional audio engineer to monitor on-stage monitor mix and FOH
- See stage plot for microphone needs and placement

FOH Mix Position, Equipment, and Power

- Two (2) 15 amp, 110 volt quad-boxes (Edison plug) (1 stage left, 1 stage right)
- FOH mix position at engineer's discretion

Stage Requirements

- Preferably at least 15' wide x 10' deep (contact , somewhat flexible)

Lighting Requirements

- Stage lighting must be blacked-out at the beginning & end of each performance set.
- May provide gobos at the show to use during blackout
- Venue must provide a Lighting Technician/Operator.
- During the show, using 1 background wash per song is sufficient. Wash should be either a blue wash or red (red preferred)



1.347.482.1775
info@orchestrotica.com
orchestrotica.com/quartet
Tech rider Oct. 2015

Ground Transportation

- Presenter will assume responsibility for local ground transportation of artists unless otherwise discussed and agreed to via phone or email

Local Crew and Stage Setup

- One (1) able-bodied member of local crew (preferably dressed in black shirt, black pants, black shoes) will be on hand at arrival, and during performance to assist with setup/teardown of percussion instruments
- All sound equipment will be set up per the provided stage-plot diagram 30 minutes prior to the sound check (to be advanced).

Hotel Accommodations:

- (5) single/queen rooms in a minimum 3-star hotel
- Hotels that provide complimentary breakfast are preferable

Venue Accommodations:

- (1) male dressing with clean towels, full-length mirrors, and clothing racks. Rooms should be near a private bathroom w/ hot water.
- Refreshments: for (5) people. Example food might include from the following: mixed greens, balsamic/olive oil dressing, grape leaves, hummus, Greek yogurt, falafel wraps. Sandwiches: ham, chicken, turkey, cheese, bread(s), pasta salads, crudité, berry mixes (strawberry, raspberry, blackberry etc), bags of plain potato chips, lettuce, tomatoes, onions, mayo and spicy mustard). Drinks: coffee, hot tea, Coke, sparkling and still bottled water appreciated. Paper cups, plates, napkins, and utensils.
- (5) Bottles of water on stage
- Dressing rooms and refreshments should be ready and available for group upon load-in.

Mr. Ho's Orchestrotica (Quintet)

Backline Information

Contact: Brian O'Neill

Artistic Director

1.347.482.1775 (w) 1.617.905.9660 (m)

email: info@orchestrotica.com

This list should be confirmed 4 weeks prior to the event.
Depending on travel logistics, some items may not be needed.

Percussion

- 1 x Vibraphone (pref. Yamaha Gold Tour Vibe). Min. 3 or 3.5 octave, height adjustable, graduated bars. (Artist may provide this; confirm ahead w/ Brian O'Neill)
- 2 x boom-cymbal stands
- 1 x cajon (preferably Schlagwerk with snare side)
- 1 x bongos (pair)
- 1 x seated bongo stand
- 1 x snare drum w/ stand
- 1 x doumbek / darbuka
- 1 x floor tom

Guitars/Bass

- 1 x upright 4-string bass (carved) – NOT PLYWOOD - with pickup (preferably Realist or Full Circle). Should have adjustable bridge and new strings, either Thomastick Spirocore, belcanto, obbligate, or daddario jazz strings preferably.
- 1 x Gallien Krueger MB150 or SWR amp, min. 150 watts, with xlr out for DI
- 1 x resonator guitar, National Steel preferred brand, tricone or style-o preferred (NO spider-cones), nickel plated brass or steel body preferred over wood body, MUST be rounded neck (NOT square neck) and set up for finger usage in the left hand, NOT for bottleneck slide (e.g. action must be low)

Misc.

- 8 x Manhasset-style flat-back music stands with tight/stiff trays
- 4 x Stand lights (if stage is on the dark side)
- 1 x folding table (min 4'x4') covered in black cloth/towels positioned near vibist
- 1 x DI box for oud player