

February 17, 2010, [Featured Articles](#), [Classical](#)

Profile: Luca Lombardi

By [David Peironnet](#) Sun, Feb 14, 2010

[BOOKMARK](#) [f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [m](#)

The Kansas City Symphony will perform the world premiere of Luca Lombardi's "Flute Concerto" this weekend at the Lyric Theatre and The Carlsen Center. The piece was commissioned by the Symphony and will be performed by world-renowned flutist Emmanuel Pahud.



Finding a place to categorize Luca Lombardi isn't easy. He writes a lot of different things. He lives in different places. His interests vary widely. It's probably best just to listen to the different things he's involved in rather than try to put him into a single box.

His website tells us, "From the very beginning, Lombardi had a passion for Stravinsky and Bartók." OK, that sort of gives us a starting point. He also was drawn to the "avant-garde movement" of the 1960s and 1970s, and wrote works such as *Analisi* for three synthesizers, and *Senza titolo* with text of the writings of Ho Chi Minh and Richard Nixon for voice and synthesizer. Think you're getting the picture?

But then he began writing only for conventional concert instruments and traditional concert settings, though his music has a sound and "feel" distinctly his own.

How do you categorize such a person?

We can't. But we can ask some questions - which we did. And that may reveal a little of what to expect when Luca Lombardi's *Flute Concerto* makes its world premiere with the Kansas City Symphony the weekend of February 19, 20 and 21.

David Peironnet: The Kansas City Symphony chose you to compose a piece of music. How did this come about? Did the music director, Michael Stern, ask you to write a new composition or was this selected in another way?

Luca Lombardi: When I listened to Emmanuel Pahud's playing, I was impressed by the beauty of his sound as well as the musical intelligence of his interpretation. He listened to my music and liked it. So we decided that I would write a concerto for him. The commission by Michael Stern and the Kansas City Symphony made it possible. (Emmanuel Pahud will perform Lombardi's composition as a flute soloist with the Symphony.)

DR: You appear to enjoy composing for the flute. For example, you first wrote for a flute in your *Adagio* in the 1960s then several more pieces beginning in the late 1990s, including the *Flatus* for four flutes in 1999 and the *Storia di Giona* last year. Why does the flute appeal to you?

LL: As a matter of fact, starting in the late 1990s, I wrote more than ever before for the flute. This is because I met some outstanding flutists such as Mario Caroli and Roberto Fabbriani. So in my *Opera Prospero* (based on *The Tempest* by Shakespeare), there is a flutist on stage who is an instrumental alter ego of Ariel's magic spirit (sung by four female voices). A solo flute piece derived from the opera is *Nel vento, con Ariel*. Other recent pieces for flute, or that include the flute, are *Einstein-Dialog* for flute and cello, *Bremer Trio* for flute, cello, and piano, *Echo de Syrinx* for solo flute and - just written - a transcription of Bach's choral *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* for solo flute.

As a wind instrument, the flute is close to the sound of nature. In many respects, it is a "primal instrument," dealing with air and breath. It stays at the very origin of everything - of life itself.

DP: Most of your compositions use traditional orchestra instruments, yet you also wrote for electronic instruments and synthesized voices back in the 1970s. What attracted you to experimental type of music? Why have you returned to more conventional orchestral scorings?

LL: When I was younger, I wanted to experiment with all kinds of possibilities of generating musical sounds. So I studied electronic music and also founded a group for live electronic music (Musica ex Machina with Alvin Curran and Domenico Guaccero). Today, I'm still interested in experimenting, but I believe to that, it is not necessary to use unheard-of sounds. Electronically generated sounds age quickly while you can discover again and again the beauty and richness of the sounds generated by old instruments such as a cello or a flute.



I always liked writing for orchestra, which is a wonderfully complex organism, but at the same time full of wonderful individualities and collectiveness.

DP: When you listen to any piece of music that you've never heard before - whether it's in a concert hall or a popular piece on the radio - what do you as a composer listen for?

LL: I try to listen without prejudices. Sometimes a song might be more valuable than a pretentious piece of so-called serious music. I expect a piece to surprise and move me.

DP: What should Kansas City audiences listen for when they hear your flute concerto for the first time?

LL: They, like I, should experience music with "open" ears - without prejudices.

DP: What are you working on now?

LL: At the moment I'm not composing. I walk through the streets of the city or on the shore of the sea (in Tel Aviv, where I pass part of the year), thinking of the next commitments, like an orchestral piece for La Scala in Milan and a new opera.

The Kansas City Symphony

Emmanuel Pahud, flute soloist

World premiere of Luca Lombardi's flute concerto

Friday, February 19 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, February 20 at 8 p.m.

Lyric Theatre

11th and Central Street, Kansas City, MO

Sunday, February 21 at 2 p.m.

The Carlsen Center

College Blvd. and Quivira Road, Overland Park, KS

For tickets call 816-471-0400 or online at www.kcsymphony.org

A related item

Three young flutists will perform with Emmanuel Pahud when he conducts a master class this Thursday, February 18. Pahud is an internationally recognized flutist who is in Kansas City to perform with the Kansas City Symphony. The master class will be at the Lyric Theatre. Admission is free, but reservations are required. For tickets call the Symphony box office at 816-471-0400.

By [David Peironnet](#)



Special to KCM

David Peironnet has been a concert-goer for more years than he would care to admit, and can clearly recall hearing the Kansas City Philharmonic under the baton of Hans Schweiger. This comes from someone who admits to be only 24 years old though acknowledges that his undergraduate degree was not in math but rather political science - a group of people who are notoriously able to see only those facts they want to see in statistical data.

David has chummed out the newsletter for the Friends of the Symphony - Kansas City for six or seven years. He doesn't recall and really doesn't care how many years it has been because the only thing that's important is the next deadline - and the one after that.

This is one of a series of interviews he runs periodically usually consisting of five open-ended questions which reveal answers which can give information to the person walking into a concert hall for the first time, or like himself have been enjoying concerts for many years.

David and Kathy Peironnet frequently work at the Friends of the Symphony gift shop which is located in the lobby of the Lyric Theatre. The next time you come to a concert, stop by and say, "hello." Ask for a copy of the current FoS newsletter. If a copy isn't available, just ask and one will be mailed to you.

Please [login](#) to post your comments.

More Featured Articles

KC Events this week and beyond

Looking for something to do this weekend? Click here for the KC Events calendar of theatre, classical music, dance and jazz events through 2011. Highlights of this week's classical music and dance offerings are in Don Dagenais' "City Classics." For current Theatre listings visit Victor Wishna's "City Stage." Enjoy!

KC Events this week and beyond

For theatre, classical, dance and jazz events for the upcoming week and beyond, visit the KC Events calendar. Highlights of this week's classical music and dance offerings are in Don Dagenais' "City Classics."

Real stories inspire real dancing

Think you know hip-hop? "Groovaloo," the award-winning show created by Bradley Rapier and Danny Cistone, just might make you think again.

SEARCH

Search KCMet!

[Search](#)

Fine Arts Chorale
presents
A Valentine's Tribute to Ginger Rogers
February 13 6:30 p.m.
Advance tickets recommended at www.fineartschorale.org

JOYCE DIDONATO
SUN FEB 13
Select your seats at HJSERIES.ORG

THE FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC
SHANTICLEER
Saturday, Feb. 5 | 8:00 pm
Community of Christ Temple

Listen Live
Click here for live streaming
98.1FM HD2 • 1660AM
KXTR
KANSAS CITY'S CLASSICAL STATION

Click here to promote your business to over 11,000 arts lovers monthly
KCMETROPOLIS.ORG
Kansas City's Online Journal of the Performing Arts