

Review: Moshe Knoll, "Simplicity" for Soprano, Cello, and Piano, Feb 21, 2017

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Resounding Love for Love Resounding: The ARK Trio Shines at Symphony Space

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The ARK Trio (soprano [Allison Charney](#), cellist [Kajsa William-Olsson](#) and pianist [Reiko Uchida](#)) had an auspicious debut presenting six world premieres of new classical compositions in front of a surprisingly packed and enthusiastic audience at [Symphony Space's Leonard Nimoy](#) Thalia this past Valentine's Day.

In a city where even the most revered classical music institutions offer new works in relatively small doses, this intrepid program, "Love Resounding" was noteworthy entirely because it presented a complete program of new classical works, inspired by the trio's unique sound. As explained from the stage, the combination of soprano, cello and piano is so unusual that the trio members quickly realized the paucity of works in the classical canon available for their use. Driven by necessity, the ARK trio commissioned six new works from composers Michael Ching, [Dina Pruzhansky](#), [Moshe Knoll](#) and [Kim D. Sherman](#). In their inaugural concert the ARK trio operated with seamless integration, blending, supporting and

complimenting each other. Unlike many concerts featuring vocal music, where the lights are kept on low so the audience can follow the text in their program, and distractions abound by the constant turning of pages - this was happily not the case. The moment the house lights darkened, the audience was ushered into the world created by the clear and rapturous performances of this music written specifically for the trio. Of note, Ms. Charney's gift of clarity in both language and dramatic intention obliterated any need to refer to the text on the page, even when the text was not in English....

The first half of this ambitious program concluded with [Moshe Knoll](#)'s showstopping cantata, "Simplicity." This setting of texts by Henry David Thoreau is a musical study of transcendental timelessness. "Simplicity" masterfully shifts musical techniques from eras of the baroque, classical, romantic (as well as jazz-pop) in an ever-changing meter that leaves the audience with no sense of time or space. Knoll's mercurial composition, equally reminiscent of both Bach and Phillip Glass, particularly underscored pianist Ms. Uchida's exquisite playing of the composer's florid, soloistic passages with seamless skill and great beauty. The opening cello solo was delivered with rich sensitivity by Ms. William-Olsson, and Ms. Charney's pliant voice soared throughout. One couldn't help but notice how timely Thoreau's commentary is in our contemporary social/political climate....

With [Symphony Space](#)'s growing reputation for new classical music one definitely left the Leonard Thalia hoping for the next opportunity to hear the ARK Trio.

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