

BIOGRAPHY - PHILIP GLASS ENSEMBLE

Established by composer Philip Glass, the first performance by the Philip Glass Ensemble was held in May 1969 at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, City. Embraced first by the visual art community working in SoHo in the early 1970's, the early concerts performed by the Philip Glass Ensemble were considered visual as well as musical events and were often performed in art galleries, artist lofts, and museum spaces rather than traditional performing art centers.

Since that time, the members of the PGE have become known as the premiere performers of the music of Philip Glass and continue to be an inspiration for new work. Over the past thirty years, the group has performed on four continents in some of the most prestigious music festivals and concert venues throughout the world. They have been featured in Philip Glass' opera *Einstein on the Beach* as well as the music theater projects *Hydrogen Jukebox*; *1000 Airplanes on the Roof*; *The Photographer*; *La Belle et la Bête*; and *Monsters of Grace*.

In June 2004, in Athens, Greece, Glass premiered *Orion*, a new work for ensemble and world musicians commissioned by the Cultural Olympiad 2001-2004. Following its world premiere in Athens, *Orion* was performed in Greece, Italy, France, London, Australia, as well as cities in the United States.

The Philip Glass Ensemble tours regularly with *Music in Twelve Parts*, *Koyaanisqatsi*, *Powaqqatsi*, *La Belle et la Bête*, and *Dracula*. In 2012-5, they also appeared in the international revival of Robert Wilson and Philip Glass's seminal opera, *Einstein on the Beach* remounted in honor of the composer's 75th Birthday season.

In 2018, the Philip Glass Ensemble premiered a new orchestration of *Music with Changing Parts*, which was originally written for the Ensemble in 1970. Expanded to include a brass and choral section, the piece premiered at Carnegie Hall in New York, performed by students from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the San Francisco Girls Chorus, conducted by Valérie Saint-Agathe.

2019 will mark the 50th Anniversary of the Philip Glass Ensemble, and will be celebrated with a series of special performance events.