

David Lang

Biography and Works



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Passionate, prolific, and complicated, composer David Lang embodies the restless spirit of invention. Lang is at the same time deeply versed in the classical tradition and committed to music that resists categorization, constantly creating new forms.

In the words of *The New Yorker*, "With his winning of the Pulitzer Prize for *the little match girl passion* (one of the most original and moving scores of recent years), Lang, once a postminimalist enfant terrible, has solidified his standing as an American master."

Many of Lang's pieces resemble each other only in the fierce intelligence and clarity of vision that inform their structures. His catalogue is extensive, and his opera, orchestra, chamber, and solo works are by turns ominous, ethereal, urgent, hypnotic, unsettling, and very emotionally direct. Much of his work seeks to expand the definition of virtuosity in music — even the deceptively simple pieces can be fiendishly difficult to play and require incredible concentration by musicians and audiences alike.

Commissioned by Carnegie Hall for Paul Hillier's vocal ensemble Theater of Voices, *the little match girl passion* was awarded the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for music. Of the piece, *The Washington Post's* Tim Page said, "I don't think I've ever been so moved by a new, and largely unheralded, composition as I was by David Lang's *little match girl passion*, which is unlike any music I know."

Other recent projects include: *reason to believe*, for Trio Medieval and the Norwegian Radio Orchestra; *world to come (cello and orchestra)*, premiered by cellist Maya Beiser and the Norrlands Operans Symfoniorkester; *darker*, premiered by Ensemble Musiques Nouvelles; *plainspoken*, a new work for the New York City Ballet; *writing on water*, for the London Sinfonietta, with libretto and visuals by English filmmaker Peter Greenaway; *the difficulty of crossing a field*, a fully-staged opera for the Kronos Quartet; *loud love songs*, a concerto for the percussionist Evelyn Glennie; and the oratorio *Shelter*, written with co-composers Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe and staged by Ridge Theater at the Next Wave Festival of the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Lang is one of America's most performed composers. "There is no name yet for this kind of music," wrote *Los Angeles Times* music critic Mark Swed of Lang's work, but audiences around the globe are hearing more and more of it, in performances by such organizations as Santa Fe Opera, the New York Philharmonic,

the Netherlands Chamber Choir, the Boston Symphony, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, and the Kronos Quartet; at Tanglewood, the BBC Proms, The Munich Biennale, the Settembre Musica Festival, the Sidney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival, and the Almeida, Holland, Berlin, and Strasbourg Festivals; in theater productions in New York, San Francisco, and London; alongside the choreography of Twyla Tharp, La La La Human Steps, The Netherlands Dance Theater, and the Paris Opera Ballet; and at Lincoln Center, the Southbank Centre, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Barbican Centre, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Lang is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the Pulitzer, Rome, and BMW Music-Theater Prizes (Munich); and grants from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1999, he received a Bessie Award for his music in choreographer Susan Marshall's *The Most Dangerous Room in the House*, performed by the Bang on a Can All-Stars at the Next Wave Festival of the Brooklyn Academy of Music. *The Carbon Copy Building* won the 2000 *Village Voice* OBIE Award for Best New American Work. The recording of *The Passing Measures*, on Cantaloupe, was named one of the best CDs of 2001 by *The New Yorker*. His recent CD, "Pierced," on Naxos, was praised both on the rock music site *Pitchfork* and in the classical magazine *Gramophone*, and was called his "most exciting new work in years" by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Paul Hillier led the Theatre of Voices & Ars Nova Copenhagen on the CD of *the little match girl passion* released by Harmonia Mundi. The recording won the 2010 Grammy Award for Best Small Ensemble Performance.

Lang is co-founder and co-artistic director of New York's legendary music festival Bang on a Can. His work has been recorded on the Sony Classical, Harmonia Mundi, Teldec, BMG, Point, Chandos, Argo/Decca, and Cantaloupe labels, among others.

David Lang's music is published by Red Poppy (ASCAP) and is distributed worldwide by G. Schirmer, Inc.

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Opera and Music Theatre

Anatomy Theater (2006) 1h 15'
Text: (English) Mark Dion; 18th-century medical notes and journals
Solo: Mezzo Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass
fl, cl(bcl), tpt, perc, pf, vn, va, vc, db
Performance materials on rental

The Difficulty of Crossing a Field (1999) 1h 15'
Text: (English) Libretto by Mac Wellman
Solo: Soprano, Mezzo soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass
Chorus: small choir
2vn, va, vc
Performance materials on rental

Judith and Holofernes (1989) 25'
Text: Scenario by the composer
bcl, tpt, tbn, perc, egtr, pf, vn, db
Performance materials on rental

Modern Painters (1994) 1h 50'
Text: (English) Libretto by Manuela Hoelterhoff.
Solo: 3 Baritones, 2 Basses, Mezzo Soprano, 4 Tenors;
lyric Soprano, dramatic Tenor, character Soprano,
2 silent roles
chorus
2(pic)2(ca)2(bcl)2/4220/2perc/pf(syn).hp/str
Performance materials on rental

Dance

Amelia (2002) 1h 20'
Voice, violin, cello, piano

The Most Dangerous Room in the House (1997) 1h 10'
bcl, pf, perc, egtr, ebgr, vc, db
Performance materials on rental

plainspoken (2010) 22'
2vn, va, vc, pf

Salt (1999)
performance tape
Performance materials on rental

Woodmans (2010) 34'
cd

Orchestra

Eating Living Monkeys (1985/87) 8'
3+pic.3+ca.3+bcl.3/4331/4perc/hp.pf/str
Performance materials on rental

Grind to a Halt (1996) 11'
2+pic.32+bcl.2+cbn/4331/timp.4perc/hp.pf/str
Performance materials on rental

How to Pray (2002) 10'
3.2.2+bcl.3/4331/pf/timp/3perc/str
Alt: vc, egtr, Horg, pf, perc - all instruments amplified
Performance materials on rental

International Business Machine (1990) 5'
2+pic.333/4331/4perc/cel.hp/str
Performance materials on rental

Soloist(s) and Orchestra

concerto (world to come) (2003) 24'
Solo: Cello
1.1.1+bcl.1/2.0.0.0/perc/str
Performance materials on rental

Fur (2004) 23'
Solo: Piano
3.2+ca.2+bcl.2+cbn/4331/timp.4perc/cel/str
This work is currently unavailable

Loud Love Songs (2004) 15'
Solo: Percussion
1222/2111/timp.3perc/pf/str
Performance materials on rental

pierced (2007) 15'
Solo: Cello, Percussion, Piano
str
Performance materials on rental

reason to believe (2011) 15'
Available for performances after October 2014
Solo: 3 female voices (SSA)
2+pic.2.2.2/4.3.2+btbn.1/timp.2perc/hp/str

Works for Band/Wind/Brass Ensemble

Cheating, Lying, Stealing (wind ensemble version) (1993) 11'
arr./ed./orch. (2011)
2+pic.2.3+ebcl+bcl.2asx+tsx+barsx.3/
4.3.2+btbn.1+euph/ 4perc/pf/db
Performance materials on rental

Work List

David Lang

Large Ensemble (7 or more players)

Before Roll, Ocean (2008) <i>Part IV of 'Water'</i> 0+pic.0.0.0/0000/glock(perc)+vib(perc)/pf/egtr/ str(1.1.1.1.1) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	7' 20"
Child (2001) <i>Movements sold separately. All five are needed to perform "Child."</i> fl(pic), cl(bcl), perc, vn, va, vc, pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	42'
Darker (2010) 12 solo strings <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	1h 0'
Forced March (2008) fl, bcl, tbn, pf, perc, egtr, vn, va, vc, db; amplified <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	10'
I Fought the Law (1998) pic, ob, ebcl, tpt, vn, va, vc, db, two pieces of junk metal (1 or 2 players) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	6'
increase (2002) 1111/1110/2perc/pf.syn/str (1.1.1.1.1 all amplified) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	11'
My Evil Twin (1992) 003(bcl).0/2000/perc/hp.eorg.ebgtr/str (0.0.2.2.0) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	11'
My International (2012) <i>Available for performances after January 2013</i> 0+pic.1.1.1/1.1.1.1/perc/pf/2vn.va.vc.db	4'
O Isis and Osiris (2005) 2hn, 2tpt, 3tbn, timp <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	4'
Open (2008) 2222/4000/str(0.0.0.1.1) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	3'
Slow Movement (1993) 2fl, asx, tsx, barsx, 2egtr, ebgtr, 2syn, acn, perc, evn, evc; all amplified <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	25'
Spud (1986) 111(bcl)0/1000/timp/str(1.0.1.1.1) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	10'

Street (1993) fl, 3sx, hn, 3tpt, 3tbn, pf, ebgtr <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	8'
sweet air (version for small orchestra) (1999) 1110/0000/perc/pf/str(11111) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	8'
Soloist(s) and Large Ensemble (7 or more players)	
Are You Experienced? (1987-88) Solo: Narrator, Electric Tuba 1111/1110/perc/pf[syn].egtr/va.vc.db <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	23'
Hammer Amour (1979, rev. 1989) Solo: Piano 2fl, 2cl, 2hn, tpt, tbn, perc <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	10'
Men (2001) Solo: Trombone ca, bcl, barsx, 2pf, 2perc, va, vc, db (all amplified) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	45'
The Passing Measures (1998) Solo: 8 Alto voices, Bass Clarinet 0000/4331/4perc/2pf.eb/8vc.2db (all amplified) <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	45'
Writing on Water (2005) Solo: 2 Baritones, Bass tpt, hn, tbn, 2 perc, pf, egtr, ebass, va, vc; amp <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	32'
Works for 2-6 Players	
Breathless (2003) fl, ob, cl, bn, hn <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	12'
Burn Notice (1988) fl, vc, pf Alt: vn, vc, pf <i>Full Score 14007999 for sale</i> <i>Set of Parts 14018551 for sale</i>	7'
Cheating, Lying, Stealing (1993) bcl, vc, pf, perc, and two antiphonal brake drums <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	11'

Work List

David Lang

Dance/Drop (alternate version) (1987) arr./ed./orch. (arr. 1997) fl(pic), bcl, perc, pf, vn, vc <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	11'	stuttered chant (2011) <i>Available for performances after November 2012</i> perc, vc	4'
Dance/Drop (original version) (1987) bn, barsx, pf, syn, perc <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	11'	Sunray (2006) cl, vc, db, egtr, pf, perc <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	11'
Frag (1984) fl, ob, vc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	7'	sweet air (1999) fl, cl, vn, vc, pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	8'
Hilda glock, vib -- Licensing rights only, no materials available. Audio CD available from cantaloupemusic.com <i>Performance materials on rental</i>		Table of Contents (2008) 2 perc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	8'
How to Pray (2002) vc, egtr, Horg, pf, perc - all instruments amplified <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	10'	these broken wings (2008) fl (pic), cl (bcl), vn, vc, perc, pf <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	16'
Illumination Rounds (1981) vn, pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	10'	undanceable (2010) vc, pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	3'
involuntary (2011) 2pic, 2tpt, perc	3' 30"	unused swan (2012) cl, perc, pf, egtr, vc, db; audio component	5' 30"
Lend/Lease (2008) pic, perc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	3'	Vent (1990) fl, pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	7'
Little Eye (1999) cello and 4 non-percussionists <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	7'	Warmth (2006) 2egtr <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	7'
My Very Empty Mouth (1999) fl, bcl, vn, va, vc, pf <i>Performance materials on rental</i>	13'	Wed (1995) 2vn, va, vc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	4'
Revolutionary Etudes (2006) saxophone quartet <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	22'	wreck/wed (1995) 2vn, va, vc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	11'
Short Fall (2000) pic, pf, vn, vc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	4'		
The So-Called Laws of Nature (2002) 4 perc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	32'		
Stick Figure (2001) cl, pf, perc, vc, and 1 or 2 non-percussionists <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	10'		
		Solo Works (excluding keyboard)	
		The Anvil Chorus (1991) perc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	7'
		I Feel Pretty (2001) double bass <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	5'
		Miracle Ear (1996) perc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	4'

Press Release (2001) bn <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	10'	Cut (2002) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	8'
Press Release (1991) bass clarinet Alt: bn <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	10'	Face so Pale (1992) 6 pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	9'
Press Release (version for baritone saxophone) (2001) baritone saxophone <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	10'	Gravity (2005) pf 4-hands <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	5'
Scraping Song (1997, rev. 2001) perc <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	9'	Memory Pieces (1992-97) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	30'
String of Pearls (2006) marimba <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	9'	Miracle Ear (1996) Toy pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	4'
Thorn (1993) flute <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	5'	ordinary (2012) <i>Available for performances after March 2013</i> org	3'
Unchained Melody (2004) percussion solo: 7 glockenspiel notes, 7 noises, 1 brake drum or other nasty metal <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	7'	Orpheus Over and Under (1989) 2pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	18'
world to come (2003) cello and audio playback <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	24'	The Point (2003) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	3'
Solo Keyboard(s)		Spartan Arcs (1992) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	3'
after gravity (20076) piano 4-hands <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	8'	this was written by hand (2003) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	9'
before gravity (2012) pf 4-hands <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	3'	wavy (2012) pf 6-hands <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	3'
Boy (2001) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	3'	Wed pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	5'
Broken Door (1997) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	5'	While Nailing at Random (1983) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	10'
Cage (1992) pf <i>Performance materials sold by Rental Library</i>	4'		

Chorus a cappella / Chorus plus 1 instrument

after stephen foster 20'

Text: Stephen Foster
Chorus: SATB
perc
Performance materials on rental

Again (After Ecclesiastes) (2005) 5'

Chorus: SSAATB chorus
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

battle hymns (2009) 50'

Text: (English) David Lang, after Sullivan Ballou, Stephen Foster and Abraham Lincoln
SATB and snare drum
Performance materials on rental

By Fire (1984) 5'

Text: "Attacking with Fire" from Sun Tzu's "The Art of War"
Chorus: a cappella SATB chorus
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

evening morning day (2007) 6'

Chorus: SSA
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

For Love Is Strong (2008) 11'

Chorus: SATB chor
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

Give Me (2008) 5'

Text: (English) David Lang
Part V of 'Water'
Chorus: TTTBBB
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

Have Mercy My God from "The Little Match Girl Passion" 4' 38"

Chorus: SATB
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

Hecuba 18'

Chorus: SSAA
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

I Lie (2001) 5'

Chorus: SAA chorus
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

I Live in Pain (2010) 4'

Text: the composer (after contessa de dia)
Chorus: SSA a cappella
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

i never (2010) 9'

Text: (English) the composer
Sale from Rental Library
Chorus: 40 voices a cappella
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

I Want to Live (2005) 4'

Text: Deborah Artman
Chorus: women's voices
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

The Little Match Girl Passion (for chorus) (2007) 35'

SATB chorus; percussion
(played by members of the chorus)
Performance materials on rental

Mary Stuart Choruses (1998) 40'

Chorus: SATB
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

Oh Graveyard (lay this body down) (2010) 3'

Text: (English) Traditional and the composer
Chorus: SATB a cappella
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

this condition (2000) 5'

Text: Lydia Davis
Chorus: SAA chorus
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

Chorus and Orchestra/Ensemble

Depart (2002) 18'

Chorus: SA voices
3 cellos
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

Roll, Ocean (2008) 5' 30"

Text: (English) David Lang (after Lord Byron)
Part VII of 'Water'
Chorus: SATB
1000/0000/2perc/pf/egtr/str (1.1.1.1.1)
Performance materials on rental

Statement to the Court (2010) 15'

Text: Eugene Debs
Chorus: SATB
perc, str
Performance materials on rental

Work List

David Lang

Solo Voice(s) and up to 6 players

ark luggage (for soprano and piano) (2012) 9'
Available for performances after March 2014
Solo: Soprano
pf

ark luggage (for soprano and string quartet) (2012) 9'
Available for performances after March 2014
Solo: Soprano
2vn, va, vc

Death Speaks (2011) 26'
Text: (English) the composer
Solo: Soprano(bass drum)
pf, egtr, vn(also sings); all amplified

The Little Match Girl Passion (for solo voices) (2007) 35'
Solo: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass (all playing percussion)
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

love fail (2012) 55'
Available for performances after December 2014
Solo: SSAA

Music for Gracious Living (1992/96) 22'
Text: Deborah Artman
Solo: Actor
2vn, va, vc
Score 14008001 for sale
Set of Parts 14008002 for sale

My Soul (2008) 6' 35"
Text: (English) David Lang (after Schubert, after Goethe)
Part I of 'Water'
Solo: 4 Voices
pic, bcl, pf, glock, perc, vc
Performance materials on rental

pay me now (2000) 2'
Solo: Soprano
viola, cello, bass
Performance materials sold by Rental Library

The Wood and the Vine (2011)
Available for performances after December 2014
Four women's voices

Electroacoustic Works

killer (2009) 4' 44"
Available for performances after May 2014
electric violin, kick drum, and prerecorded media

Work List

David Lang

AVAILABILITY

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Due to composer revisions, performer exclusivity, or other reasons, a work may not be available.

For more information on the music of David Lang, please visit www.musicsalesclassical.com or contact:

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