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In a Rainstorm of Brass, the Lightning Struck From Audience Smartphones
Kronos, Asphalt Orchestra and Jacob Garchik Perform

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Musicians and audiences have wilted in the heat at outdoor concerts this summer. But on Sunday evening, a hardy audience sat on wet chairs and huddled under umbrellas for several hours to hear the Asphalt Orchestra and the Kronos Quartet perform as part of the Lincoln Center Out of Doors festival.

The lineup in the Damrosch Park Bandshell began with Jacob Garchik's the Heavens, an irresistible band subtitled the Atheist Gospel Trombone Choir. Mr. Garchik, who has written many arrangements and transcriptions for the Kronos Quartet, became fascinated with gospel after hearing the trombone choir "shout" bands of the United House of Prayer for All People. His nine-member ensemble performed selections including the jubilant "Optimism," the foot-tapping "Digression on the History of Jews and Black Music" and "Dialogue With My Great-Grandfather," in which a somber tune unfolds over dignified chords.

The Asphalt Orchestra, an avant-garde marching band, has been a regular at Lincoln Center Out of Doors in recent seasons. The quirky ensemble, the brainchild of Bang on a Can, plays funky arrangements and imaginative new works instead of standard brass-band fare.

Here, the orchestra offered a homage to the rock band Pixies, performing inventive, idiomatic arrangements of songs from “Surfer Rosa” in honor of that album’s 25th anniversary. The Kronos Quartet joined Asphalt, whose performances included some lively choreography, for a soulful version of Pixies’ “Where Is My Mind.”

The Kronos Quartet, which has revolutionized the chamber music genre with its myriad commissions, multigenre collaborations and innovative approach to programming and presentation, celebrates its 40th birthday this year. It concluded the evening with seven new works, including several premieres commissioned by Lincoln Center.

The quartet’s lineup opened with Bryce Dessner’s intense, driven “Aheym (Homeward)” and also included Jherik Bischoff’s lilting “Semiperfect Number.” Images of planets were projected onto a screen during Nicole Lizée’s “Death to Kosmische,” whose atmospheric and eerie sound world, enhanced by the Omnichord (an electronic instrument), paid tribute to the experimental electronic music performed in the late 1960s and early ’70s by German rock groups.

The lineup also included Yuri Boguina’s passionate and dramatically contoured “On the Wings of Pegasus” and the Kronos’s arrangement of Clint Mansell’s “Death Is the Road to Awe,” from the film “The Fountain.”

The concert concluded on an entertaining note with Dan Deacon’s “Four Phases of Conflict.” Audience members were asked to download his app, which generates synchronized light and sound. Then they were instructed to make noises of varying duration and volume, resulting in a rich tapestry of acoustic, electronic and human sounds that unfolded against kaleidoscopic flashes from the umpteen devices in the dimly lighted plaza.

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/30/arts/music/kronos-asphalt-orchestra-and-jacob-garchik-perform.html?_r=0