

## Biography

Hailed by NPR's Fred Child as "one of the groups that has really helped to shape the future of classical music," yMusic is a group of six New York City instrumentalists flourishing in the overlap between pop and classical. Since their inception in 2008, yMusic has striven to bring a classical chamber music aesthetic to venues outside the traditional concert hall. Their virtuosic execution and unique configuration (string trio, flute, clarinet, and trumpet) have caught the attention of high profile collaborators—from Bon Iver to José Gonzalez. They followed their two full-length solo albums, 2014's *Balance Problems* and 2011's *Beautiful Mechanical* (*Time Out New York's* #1 Classical Record of that Year), with 2015's, *So There*, a collaboration with Ben Folds. Their most recent album, *First* (music by Son Lux), was released Feb 2017.

*First* was conceptualized by the members of yMusic well before any of its music was written. After exploring songwriters as composers on their first record, and rock production in the realm of contemporary classical pieces on their second, *First* is a chamber music record which emulates the flow and structure of a rock album, while remaining energetic and accessible. The familiar structure of the album (11 tracks, 40 minutes, Side A/Side B) makes it far more digestible than a traditional, 40-minute Classical work comprising of 3-4 related movements.

To further the album's concept, yMusic chose to work with a single creative team, in this case, a composer paired with a producer. Instead of tasking the composer with creating an entire album's work in isolation, this pairing created room for feedback, encouragement, and redirection. This allowed yMusic to remain somewhat removed from the compositional/workshop process and to encounter the material for the first time in the studio with a freshness that would enable them to capture, on the recorded album, the sound of the group nailing the material for the first time, with the energy of a live performance.

Their partners in this album were trusted friends and collaborators: composer, Son Lux and producer Thomas Bartlett. *First* is attractive and challenging, virtuosic and addictive. A true collaboration in the best sense, greater than the sum of its parts.

In addition to performing its own repertoire, yMusic serves as a ready-made collaborative unit for bands and songwriters. Recent joint performances include The Royal Opera House at Covent Garden and CBS Saturday Sessions. At the inaugural Eaux Claires Festival, curated by Justin Vernon and Aaron Dessner, the group performed with The Tallest Man on Earth, S Carey, The Staves, and Bon Iver. Other recent collaborations include a recording with Antony & the Johnsons for the Red Hot Organization, opening for and performing with Blake Mills, and performances with José González.

### yMusic as Educators

yMusic is a chamber sextet that works in close quarters with contemporary composers and songwriters, developing ideas into vivid, communicative performances. Since the group's instrumentation was inspired by friendship and musical admiration rather than pragmatism, yMusic only performs works and arrangements created specifically for the ensemble. Collaborating with some of the most visible and creative pop artists of their time yMusic inspires die-hard Classical Music fandom from often uninitiated audiences via their virtuosity in both concert and pop idioms.

In the classical concert sphere, yMusic has served as muse to some of the most dynamic thinkers of their generation, including Nico Muhly, Andrew Norman, Chris Thile, Caroline Shaw, Marcos Balter, and Bill T.

Jones. One of the most appealing aspects of yMusic's work is the level of interaction, give-and-take the artists have with composers they work with, both in the classical and pop spheres.

The six members of yMusic are veteran multi-taskers and virtuosos in their own right, and their ranks include multi-instrumentalists, prolific arrangers, and vocalists, affording their collaborators a vastly expandable palette.

yMusic has participated in long- and short-term educational residencies at Duke University, Southern Methodist University, North Carolina School for the Arts, and the University of South Carolina. As educators, yMusic's professional experience offers a unique perspective on a wide range of topics relevant to both composers and performers. These practica, seminars, and classes include:

- Composition Readings/Workshops
- Working with Songwriters/Arranging
- Connecting with New Audiences
- Working in a Recording Studio Environment
- Performer/Composer Collaboration
- Entrepreneurship and Creating a Brand
- Master Classes
- Private Lessons
- Chamber Music Coachings