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**Mind Out of Matter by Scott Johnson**

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World Premiere!

Scott Johnson | Alarm Will Sound

Mind Out of Matter

Composer: Scott Johnson

Based on the voice and ideas of Daniel C. Dennett

Performed by Alarm Will Sound

Artistic Director and Conductor: Alan Pierson

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I was immediately struck by the explanatory power of applying Darwinian principles to the realm of ideas, traditions, and technologies—all evolving and competing for space in their natural ecosystems of human minds. This “men’s-eye view” lent clarity to the jumble of competing genres and colliding traditions that musicians must navigate, as well as the powerful loyalty and aversion people feel toward musical styles—expressions of both their individuality and their group affiliations. These observations led to an extended essay, “The Counterpoint of Species,” which I eventually sent to Professor Dennett. By then, I had turned toward interview experiences by providing to the vanishes and intricacy of the universe, opening up aesthetic and intellectual perspectives that traditional belief systems cannot provide.

Human beings are now a decisive factor in the planetary ecosystem, and understanding the machinery of belief that drives our choices is no longer a matter of pure intellectual curiosity. It is a major evolutionary player—our most carefully considered philosophies and our least-quantified beliefs have equally crucial consequences.

—Scott Johnson, Composer

**About the Artists**

**Scott Johnson**

Scott Johnson has been a pioneering voice in the new relationship being forged between the classical tradition and the popular culture that surrounds it. Since the early 1980s, he has played an influential role in the trend toward incorporating rock-derived instrumentation into traditionally scored compositions and the use of taped, sampled, and MIDI-controlled electronic elements within instrumental ensembles. His compositions have been performed by the Kronos Quartet, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Bang on a Can All-Stars, and his own ensemble, Court Yard. His electric guitar performance in the Boston Ballet, London Contemporary Dance Theatre, and Ballett de Monte Carlo, and in Paul Schroeder’s film Party with His Musice has been recorded on the Nonesuch, CPR, Point, and Tradz labels.

Johnson’s scores generally employ both acoustic and electronic/instrumental, and he has premiered most of his electric guitar writing himself. Compositions that feature sampled voice include the groundbreaking 1982 John Snow: for The Harvard Athenaeum, Convenient Debts, The Value of People and Things, and How It Happens (commissioned by the Kronos Quartet and based on voice recordings of the late inflationist, F. Stone) awards include a 2006 Guggenheim Fellowship, a Koussevitzky commission, two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, and five grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, as well as grants and commission support from Lincoln Center, the Meet the Composer/Reader’s Digest Commissioning Fund, the Jerome Foundation, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the Concert Artists Guild. Commissioning work has included concert performances by the Kronos Quartet, the Lincoln Center, the Kronfeld, and The Kitchen as well as concert halls, art museums, and festivals throughout Europe and North America. Johnson’s recent concert appearances include Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Japan Society, Lincoln Center Festival, the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s New Wave Festival, Yale University, the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center’s Great Day in New York series. Recent other premieres include the Bang on a Can-All-Stars at Lincoln Center, the Nederlands Residentie Orchestra of November Hall, and Sentieri Selvaggi in Milan. Johnson has also published articles and essays on contemporary music in leading musicological conservatories and universities, including San Francisco and Bard Conferences, Senzoku Ongaku Daigaku, New York University, Manhattan School of Music, and Yale.

**Daniel C. Dennett**

Daniel C. Dennett, the author of Breaking the Spell (1998), Evolutionary Exegetes (Viking Penguin, 2003), and Darwin’s Dangerous Idea (Simon & Schuster, 1995), is University Professor and Anita B. Fletcher Professor of Philosophy and co-director of the Center for Cognitive Studies at Tufts University. He lives with his wife in North Andover, MA, and has a daughter, a son, and four grandchildren. He was born in Boston in 1942; the son of a historian by the same name, and received his BA in philosophy from Harvard in 1963. He then went on to work with Gilbert Ryle, under whose supervision he completed the DPhil in philosophy in 1965. He taught at University of California—Irvine from 1965 to 1977; he then moved to Tufts, where he has taught ever since. Aside from periods visiting at Harvard, Pittsburgh, Oxford, the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris, the London School of Economics, and the American University in Beirut, he has also spent a year in Japan. Possessions include a Ngorongoro Impala, a Mandarin duck, and a Theravada monk. His first book, Content and Consciousness, appeared in 1969, followed by Brainwaves (1978), Elbow Room (1984), The Intentional Dance (1987), Consciousness Explained (1991), Darwin’s Dangerous Idea (1989), Evolutionary Exegetes (1998), and Brainchildren: A Collection of Essays 1984–1996 (MIT Press and Penguin, 1998). Swarthmore: Philosophical Obstacles to a Science of Consciousness was published in 2005 by MIT Press. He co-edited The Mind’s I with Douglas Hofstadter and edited 400 scholarly articles on various aspects on the mind, published in journals ranging from Artificial Intelligence and Behavioral Sciences to Ptolemy Today and the Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism. His most recent books are Just Ask: The Human Mind’s Ultimate Answer to the Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe, and Everything (2013) and, with Linda LaScola, Captured in the Pojoc Lifting Belief Behind (Amazon.com, 2013).

Dennett gave the John Locke Lectures at Oxford in 1963, the Gavino David Young Lectures at the University of Adelaide, Australia, in 1965, and the Tanner Lecture at the University of Michigan in 1968, among many others. He has received two Guggenheim Fellowships, a Fulbright Fellowship, and a Fellowship at the Center for Advanced Studies in Behavioral Science. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1967. He was co-founder (in 1965) and co-director of the Curricular Software Studio at Tufts and helped to lay the foundations for the modern digital computer for the Smithsonian Institution, the Museum of Science in Boston, and the Computer Museum in Boston. After more than 40 summer’s hobby farming in Maine, he is selling his farm and moving to a house on an island in Maine, where he can continue his sailing and maybe resume his sculpture.

**Alarm Will Sound**

Alarm Will Sound is a 20-member band committed to innovative performances and recordings of today’s music. They have established a reputation as one of the world’s leading music groups, demanding music with energetic skill. Their performances have been described as “equal parts raucous, nonsensical, and virtuoso” by the Financial Times of London and as a “triumph of ensemble playing” by the San Francisco Chronicle. The New York Times describes Alarm Will Sound as “one of the most vital and original ensembles on the American music scene.”

The versatility of Alarm Will Sound allows it to play music on a wide variety of styles. Its repertoire ranges from European and American works, from the arch-modernist to the pop-influenced. Alarm Will Sound has been associated with the upcoming composers and ensures that contemporary music performances by John Adams, Steve Reich, David Lang, Michael Gordon, John Zorn, Brad Mehldau, Kip Johnson, Augusta Read Thomas, Derek Bermel, Benedict Mason, and Wolfgang Rihm, among others. The group includes many composer-performers, which allows for an unusual degree of insight into the creation and performance of new work.

Alarm Will Sound is the resident ensemble at the Mizouzo International Composers Festival. Having made its debut at the 2010 Festival of New Music in Colombia, the festival features eight world premiers by emerging composers. During the festival, Alarm Will Sound performed with Alarm Will Sound and two established guest composers to record their new work.

Alarm Will Sound may be heard on eight recordings. Radio RIU, their release on New Focus Recordings is the world-premiere recording of Steve Reich’s newest work for largest ensemble, based on the music of Radiohead. Caravan Americas, their release on Cantaloupe features music by Derek Bermel, whose eclectic approach draws on the musical traditions of Europe, North and South America, and Africa. Their genre-bending, critically acclaimed Acoustic Featurse live-performance arrangements of music by electronic genius Aphex Twin. This unique project taps the diverse talents within the group, from the many composers who made arrangements of the original score for the poltergeist show to the experimental approaches developed by the performers.

In 2010, the group developed and performed the Dirty Projectors’ The Getty Address in its new identity as a live performance piece at the 17th annual New Music Days Music Festival in Schleswig-Holstein. The piece is an exploration of music thatDirty Projectors front-man David Longstreth created on a computer by felicitously using his feet to play a piano. The piece is translated and arranged by Matt Marks, Alan Petross, and Chris Thompson for 23 musicians of both bands.

In 2011, after three years of development, Alarm Will Sound completed a multimedia work using music, action, image, and text to tell a story about great musicians—John Lennon, Keith Knight, Shoe Stocking, Lord Bernardo, and Leonard Bernstein—and their responses to the social, political, and creative tumult of the late 1960s. Alarm Will Sound were invited to perform Alarm Will Sound at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2013-14. The ensemble of members began playing together while studying at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. With diverse experience in composition, improvisation, jazz and popular styles, early music, and world musics, they bring a wealth of experience to Alarm Will Sound and go all the performances. alarmwillsound.com

Alarm Will Sound thanks The Aaron Copland Fund for Music and the BMI Foundation, Inc.