

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 15, 2005**

*MACHUNAS*, a performance oratorio in 4 colors  
**author Lucio Pozzi, composer Frank J. Oteri, conductor Donatas Katkus,**  
**Première at the International Christopher Summer Festival**  
Contemporary Art Center, Vokieciu 2, 2001 Vilnius Lithuania  
Saturday, August 20, 2005 6 pm  
Sunday, August 21, 2005 6 pm  
Adult Tickets: Lt. 50, € 14, \$ 19, Student tickets: Lt. 25, € 7, \$ 10

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**For more information:**

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**Description:**

***MACHUNAS***, a performance oratorio in four colors by **Lucio Pozzi** and **Frank J. Oteri**, will premiere on **Saturday, August 20, 2005 at 6 pm** at the **Contemporary Art Centre** in **Vilnius, Lithuania**. The performance, featuring the St. Christopher Chamber Orchestra conducted by **Donatus Katkus**, is a highlight of the **2005 International Christopher Summer Festival**. (A second performance will be presented on Sunday, August 21, 2005 at 6 pm.)

The story of *MACHUNAS* is an emblem of the end of twentieth century culture, in all its tragedy, irony, delusions and immense vitality. It's inspired by and based on four key episodes in the life and death of George Maciunas, an architect, artist, activist and founder of the Fluxus art movement, the last avantgarde utopia of the modern era. His name is misspelled on purpose, both due to phonetic considerations and the desire to separate this story from any accurate description of his life.

The four acts of *MACHUNAS* are divided into Yellow, Green, Red, Blue, and each act has 9 parts. *MACHUNAS* begins in Yellow, narrating the days of a young child in the old Lithuania that's about to be extinguished by the Nazis and Soviets and transitions into Green through the story of a teenager strangely out of place and time in an American-controlled refugee camp in Germany. Representing the 1960's, Red emerges with Machunas as a revolutionary crusader protesting the Vietnam War, founding Fluxus and igniting the downtown SoHo art community in New York City. The final act, Blue, features Machunas as a forgotten and rejected outcast dying prematurely of cancer in rural Massachusetts.

Throughout the oratorio the protagonist, Machunas, is played by a man singing on one note. All other parts, male and female, are sung by women and are nameless. The score ranges from Lithuanian folkloric songs, Romantic music, twelve-tone compositional structures, a fluxus rock band of electric guitars, sax, synthesizer, shakuhachi, live radio and theremin, to period instruments from the Baroque era. Each act consists of different ensembles with varying keyboard instruments serving as a continuo. Whereas each of the four acts features a completely different orchestration and stylistic orientation, they all share melodic and harmonic material.

The libretto and music have been written in strict collaboration between composer Frank J. Oteri and visual artist Lucio Pozzi. Their collaborative effort is now complemented in Vilnius under the care of the eminent conductor Donatas Katkus and the distinguished theatre director Oskaras Korsunovas. The whole museum main floor of the Contemporary Art Center is going to be emptied for this three-hour long performance. The audience will carry folding chairs and follows the action from room to room.

The St. Christopher Chamber Orchestra, under the artistic direction of conductor and musicologist Donatas Katkus, has a unique voice in the Baltic musical scene and is renowned for its stylistic pluralism. It will be quite at home with the wide variety of musical motifs in *MACHUNAS*. The ensemble is often labeled as a "baroque orchestra" and praised as a reviver of old scores. One of its most sensational recent performances was the project in the Trakai Sand Pit, which involved the orchestra playing on a sand "stage" along with tractors and steam shovels under the baton of Donatas Katkus.