

Cambridge Chronicle

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The arts of autumn

Cambridge artists find new ways to connect with audiences



The Radius Ensemble is the ensemble-in-residence at the Harvard Epworth Church, and will perform there Nov. 20.

By Theodore Bale
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You won't have to leave Cambridge this autumn to enjoy a wide variety of music and dance

events, offered at venues both spectacular and intimate throughout the city.

The trends? Musicians are finding new ways to connect with their audiences, giving increasingly informal performances that include discussion and education, particularly in relation to contemporary music. Dancers are moving well past the ballet/modern dance cold war into a territory that includes vernacular forms, narratives and a limitless realm of musical accompaniments.

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In the five years since it was founded by oboist Jennifer Montbach, the nine-member Radius Ensemble has earned rave reviews for its no-nonsense approach to chamber music. The group actively cultivates a diverse audience with preperformance discussions intended to foster a deeper appreciation of both contemporary and traditional scores. Radius says it is "committed to forging a connection between musicians and music lovers of all backgrounds." It's a smart move. If contemporary music, in particular, is going to survive, it has to win a new and wider audience.

Radius is now the ensemble-in-residence at the historic Harvard-Epworth Church, across from the Cambridge Common, and where both of its autumn concerts are being performed. On Oct. 2, the ensemble opened its season with a provocative program of Mozart, Milhaud, Schnittke and Rochberg. On Nov. 20, Radius returns with a Haydn piano trio, Martinu's "Quartet for clarinet, horn, cello and drum," local composer John Harbison's "Woodwind Quintet," and Tann's "Duo for oboe and viola." Never heard of Tann or Rochberg? Not to worry, the preperformance lectures will tell you everything you need to know. The performances are followed by a free reception with the artists, and tickets are only \$5-\$20. Visit www.radiusensemble.org or call 617-792-7234 for more information.

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