

Reflections on Steve Reich at 70 Concert

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I truly enjoyed Steve Reich's music which I found enlightening and inspiring. The various ethnic musical elements integrated with classical music was very creative and yet, still authentic to the specific music origin. For example, the first piece using xylophones reminded me of traditional Japanese music. I thought of the serene mountain and ancient temples in Japan when listening to this piece. His use of repeated music patterns, especially the canon, was amazing. The various layers of repetition sound modern and yet achieve an incredible harmony that resonates with Nature. His music flow which includes repeated patterns and surprising irregularity reminds me of the rain, the river, the change of seasons, and the marvel of ocean waves, of how everything in the world follows a certain order and detour with unexpected beauty.

I especially enjoyed his piece performed with a guitar ensemble, which utilizes all guitar styles, including folk, classic, electronic, and jazz guitars. The different guitar styles were integrated so intricately and still showcasing the unique characteristics of each style. It was also a great piece that crossed the borders of various music genres and highlighted the flexibility and rich texture of modern music. As suggested by the composer himself, music is alive and should encompass what is happening in the modern world. His work that includes inspirations from electronic music, multi-media, and ethnic music around the world indeed has been an eye-opening experience for me.