

M Manhattan
School of Music

CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Margaret Kampmeier, Artistic Director and Chair

TACTUS

George Manahan (BM '73, MM '76), Guest Conductor

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2019 | 7:30 PM
NEIDORFF-KARPATI HALL



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George Manahan (BM '73, MM '76), Guest Conductor
Oliver Hagen, Preparatory Conductor
Corey Mahaney, Audio Engineer

PROGRAM

STEVE REICH
(b. 1936)

Tebillim (1981)

Part I: Fast (*attacca*)
Part II: Fast
Part III: Slow (*attacca*)
Part IV: Fast

Shannyn Rinker, **Amber Evans**,** and
Megan Schubert,** sopranos; **Luke Paulino**,
countertenor; **Joshua Weinberg**, flute;
Stefanie Proulx, piccolo; **Andres Ayola**,* oboe;
Joel Roches,* English horn; **Tyler Neidermayer**
and **Alexander Parlee**,* clarinets;
Morgan Davison,* bassoon; **Jon Clancy**,
Hamza Able,* **William Hopkins**,* **Riley Barnes**,*
Caitlin Cawley,** **Matthew Ward**,*** percussion;
Thomas Feng and **Edward Forstman**, keyboards;
Rose Xiu Yi Kow and **Hyeiri Hattie Ahn**, violins;
Dudley Raine,* viola; **Wickliffe Simmons**, cello;
Zachary Merkovsky,* double bass
George Manahan, conductor

JOHN CAGE
(1912–1992)

Atlas Eclipticalis (1961)

Thomas Feng, conductor; **Stefanie Proulx**, and
Paul Mizzi, flutes; **Tyler Neidermayer**, clarinets;
Jon Clancy, percussion; **Edward Forstman** and
Jixue Yang, piano; **Joshua Weinberg**, harp;
Rose Xiu Yi Kow and **Hyeiri Hattie Ahn**, violins;
Wickliffe Simmons, cello

FREDERIC RZEWSKI
(b. 1938)

Les Moutons de Panurge (1969)

Paul Mizzi, **Stefanie Proulx** and
Joshua Weinberg, flutes;
Tyler Neidermayer, bass clarinet; **Jon Clancy**,
drums; **Jixue Yang**, piano; **Edward Forstman** and
Thomas Feng, keyboards; **Joshua Weinberg**, harp;
Rose Xiu Yi Kow and **Hyeiri Hattie Ahn**, violins;
Wickliffe Simmons, cello

Intermission

*Student guest performer
**CPP alumni guest performer
***guest performer

PROGRAM NOTES

Steve Reich

Tehillim

Steve Reich has been called “America’s greatest living composer” (*Village Voice*), “the most original musical thinker of our time” (*The New Yorker*), and “among the great composers of the century” (*New York Times*).

Reich’s musical legacy has been influential on composers and mainstream musicians all over the world. His music is known for steady pulse, repetition, and a fascination with canons; it combines rigorous structures with propulsive rhythms and seductive instrumental color, and also embraces harmonies of non-Western and American vernacular music (especially jazz).

Born in New York and raised there and in California, Reich graduated with honors in philosophy from Cornell University in 1957. For the next two years, he studied composition with Hall Overton, and from 1958 to 1961, he studied at the Juilliard School of Music with William Bergsma and Vincent Persichetti. Reich received his Master’s degree in music from Mills College in 1963, where he worked with Luciano Berio and Darius Milhaud. His studies have also included Balinese gamelan, African drumming (at the University of Ghana), and traditional forms of chanting of the Hebrew scriptures.

Different Trains and *Music for 18 Musicians*, as well as an album of his percussion works, have earned Grammy Awards, and *Double Sextet* won the Pulitzer Prize in 2009. Reich’s documentary video opera works—*The Cave* and *Three Tales*, done in collaboration with video artist Beryl Korot—have pushed the boundaries of the operatic medium and have been presented on four continents.

Reich’s music has been performed by major orchestras and ensembles around the world, including the New York and Los Angeles philharmonics; London, Sydney, San Francisco, Boston, and BBC symphony orchestras; London Sinfonietta; Kronos Quartet; Ensemble Modern; Ensemble Intercontemporain; Ensemble Signal; International Contemporary Ensemble; Bang on a Can All-Stars; Alarm Will Sound; and eighth blackbird. Several noted choreographers have created dances to his music, such as Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, Jirí Kylián, Jerome Robbins, Justin Peck, Wayne McGregor, Benjamin Millepied, and Christopher Wheeldon.

Reich was awarded the Gold Medal in Music by the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2012. He was named Commandeur de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in France, as well as a member in the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts. His honors include the Praemium Imperiale in Tokyo, the Polar Music Prize in Stockholm, the BBVA Award in Madrid, the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale, the 2016 Nemmers Prize in Music Composition from Northwestern University, as well as the Schuman Award from Columbia University, the Montgomery Fellowship from Dartmouth College, and the Regent’s Lectureship at the University of California at Berkeley. He has been awarded honorary doctorates from the Royal College of Music in London, the Juilliard School, the Liszt Academy in Budapest, and the New England Conservatory of Music, among others.

This November, Susanna Mälkki leads the Los Angeles Philharmonic in the world premiere of Reich’s *Music for Ensemble and Orchestra*. An extension of the Baroque concerto grosso, the work features a group of 20 soloists pulled from the orchestra’s ranks. The piece is also performed this season by the London Symphony Orchestra and Kristjan Järvi, Sydney Symphony Orchestra and David Robertson, and San Francisco Symphony and Michael Tilson Thomas. Reich has also composed a new collaborative art piece with Gerhard Richter for the opening of The Shed, a new multi-arts center in New York City. Debuting this spring, the new large ensemble work explores the shared structure of Reich’s new work and Richter’s *Patterns*, and is premiered by musicians from Ensemble Signal, the International Contemporary Ensemble, and AXIOM.

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Tehillim (pronounced “teh-hill-leem”) is the original Hebrew word for “Psalms.” Literally translated it means “praises,” and it derives from the three-letter Hebrew root ‘hey, lamed, lamed’ (hll), which is also the root of halleluyah. *Tehillim* is a setting of Psalms 19:2–5 (19:1–4 in Christian translations), 34:13–15 (34:12–14 in Christian translations), 118:26–27 (118:25–26 in Christian translations) and 150:4–6.

The chamber version is scored for four women’s voices (one high soprano, two lyric sopranos—[*one of these parts will be sung tonight by our CPP countertenor*]—and one alto), piccolo, flute, oboe, cor anglais, two clarinets, six percussion

(playing small tuned tambourines with no jingles, clapping, maracas, marimba, vibraphone and crotales), two electric organs, two violins, viola, cello and bass. The voices, winds and strings are amplified in performance.

The first text begins as a solo with drum and clapping accompaniment only. It is repeated with clarinet doubling the voice and with a second drum and clap in canon with the first. It then appears in two voice canon and at last the strings enter with long held harmonies. At this point all four voices, supported by a single maraca, doubled by two electric organs and harmonized by the strings sing 4 four-part canons on each of the four verses of the first text. When these are completed the solo voice restates the original complete melody with all drums and full string harmonization.

The second text begins immediately after a short drum transition. Here the three verses of text are presented in two or three voice harmony in a homophonic texture. Sometimes the voices are replaced by the cor anglais and clarinet or by the drums and clapping. Soon the melodic lines begin augmenting (or lengthening) and then adding melismas. The effect is of a melodic line growing longer and more ornate.

After a pause the third text begins in a slower tempo and with the percussion changed to a marimba and vibraphone. The text is presented as a duet first between two and then all four voices. This third text is not only the first slow movement I have composed since my student days, but also the most chromatic music I have ever composed (with the possible exception of *Variations for Winds, Strings and Keyboards* of 1979).

The fourth and final text resumes the original tempo and key signature and combines techniques used in the preceding three movements. It is, in effect, a recapitulation of the entire piece which then, in a coda based solely on the word “Halleluyah,” extends the music to its largest instrumental forces and its harmonic conclusion. This last movement affirms the key of D major as the basic tonal center of the work after considerable harmonic ambiguity.

The tambourines without jingles are perhaps similar to the small drum called “tof” in Hebrew in Psalm 150 and several other places in the Biblical text. Hand clapping as well as rattles were also commonly used throughout the Middle East in the Biblical period as were small pitched cymbals. Beyond this there is no musicological content to *Tebillim*. No Jewish themes were used for any of the melodic materials. One of the reasons I chose to set Psalms as opposed to parts of the Torah or Prophets is that the oral tradition among Jews in the West for singing Psalms has been lost. (It has been maintained by Yemenite Jews.) This meant that

I was free to compose the melodies for *Tebillim* without a living oral tradition to either imitate or ignore.

In contrast to most of my earlier work, *Tebillim* is not composed of short repeating patterns. Though an entire melody may be repeated either as the subject of a canon or variation this is actually closer to what one finds throughout the history of Western music. While the four-part canons in the first and last movements may well remind some listeners of my early tape pieces *It's Gonna Rain* and *Come Out*, which are composed of short spoken phrases repeated over and over again in close canon, *Tebillim* will probably strike most listeners as quite different from my earlier works. There is no fixed meter or metric pattern in *Tebillim* as there is in my earlier music. The rhythm of the music here comes directly from the rhythm of the Hebrew text and is consequently in flexible changing meters. This is the first time I have set a text to music since my student days and the result is a piece based on melody in the basic sense of that word. The use of extended melodies, imitative counterpoint functional harmony and full orchestration may well suggest renewed interest in Classical or, more accurately, Baroque and earlier Western musical practice. The non-vibrato, non-operatic vocal production will also remind listeners of Western music prior to 1750. However, the overall sound of *Tebillim* and in particular the intricately interlocking percussion writing which, together with the text, forms the basis of the entire work, marks this music as unique by introducing a basic musical element that one does not find in earlier Western practice including the music of this century. *Tebillim* may thus be heard as traditional and new at the same time.

—Steve Reich

TEXT

Part I (Psalm 19:2–5)

Hashamayim mesaperim kavod El; Umaaseh yadaiv magid harakia. Yom l'yom yabia omer, V'lailah l'lailah yechaveh daat. Ein omer v'ein devarim, B'li nishmah kolam. B'kal ha'aretz yatza kavam, Uviktzeh tevel mileihem.	The heavens declare the glory of G-d, The sky tells of His handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, Night to night reveals knowledge. Without speech and without words, Nevertheless their voice is heard. Their sound goes out through all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world.
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Part II

(Psalm 34:13–15)

Mi ha'ish hechafetz chayim, Ohev yamim lirot tov? Netzor l'shoncha mera, Usfateicha midaber mirmah. Sur mera va'aseh-toy, Bakesh shalom v'radfehu.	Who is the man that desires life, And loves days to see good? Guard your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit. Turn from evil, and do good, Seek peace and pursue it.
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Part III

(Psalm 18:26–27)

I'm chasid, titchasad, I'm gavar tamim, titamam. I'm navar, titbarar, V'im ikesh, titpatal.	With the merciful You are merciful, With the upright You are upright. With the pure You are pure, And with the perverse You are subtle.
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Part IV

Haleluhu b'tof umachol, Haleluhu b'nimim v'ugav. Haleluhu b'tiltzli shama, Haleluhu b'tiltzli truah. Kol hanshamah tehalel Yah, Haleluyah.	Praise Him with drum and dance, Praise Him with strings and winds. Praise Him with sounding cymbals, Praise Him with clanging cymbals. Let all that breathes praise the Eternal, Hallelujah.
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John Cage

Atlas Eclipticalis

Atlas Eclipticalis was composed on a commission from the Montreal Festival Society. It is the first part of a trilogy of which *Variations IV* is part 2 and *o'oo* is part 3. The work was originally used as music for the choreographed piece by Merce Cunningham entitled *Aeon*, with stage decors and costume design by Robert Rauschenberg. It was later used for Cunningham's first "Events" performance, *Museum Event #1*.

Like *Winter Music*, a work with which it is often performed, each phrase notated in *Atlas Eclipticalis* contains from one to ten notes, divided randomly into two groups. Pitches are notated clearly, though in an idiosyncratic way—the sizes of noteheads determine how loud or soft they are to be performed. Durations are notated above the phrases, rather than in standard time-spacing. Tempo is not given, but rather is determined—in an overarching sense—by the conductor who, rather than cuing entrances from specific instruments, maintaining a pulse, and leading phrasing, acts as an emotionless timepiece, in a literal sense.

The compositional process of this work is remarkable. Cage used the *Atlas Eclipticalis 1950.0*—an atlas of the stars published in 1958 by Antonín Bečvář [1901–1965], a Czech astronomer—superimposing musical staves over its star-charts, then tracing the shapes of the constellations—or rather, the individual stars which comprise them, onto the staff paper. In other words, the noteheads are exactly copied from the stars in the *Atlas*.

Cage instructs that the piece may be performed in whole (up to 20 minutes or more) or in part (this evening's performance will last approximately 12 minutes) by any combination of instruments drawn from the large orchestra which gave its first performance—or by full orchestra. He also allows that *Atlas Eclipticalis* may be performed simultaneously with either *Winter Music*, or *Song Books*.

The list of dedicatees brings to mind Carl Sagan's numbering of stars in the universe ("billions and billions"), and as it is composed of interesting persons, I include it here in full:

The work is dedicated to: Edgar Anderson and Dorothy, Hans Austen and Sulamith, George Avakian and Anahid [Ajemian], Louella Bacon, Cathy Berberian, Luciano Berio, Shareen Blair, Nicola Cernovich, Remy Charlip, Robert Dunn and Judith, Öyvind Fahlström and Barbro, Viola Farber, Morton Feldman and Cynthia, Ross Gortner and Priscilla, Raymond Grimaila, Lawrence Halprin and Anna, Walter Hinrichsen and Evelyn, William Jefferys, Jasper Johns, Arthur Josephson and Mary Caroline, Lois Long, Paula Madawick, Keith McGary and Donna, Bruce Markgraf and Rosemary, Pierre Mercure, Leonard Meyer and Lee, Kurt Michaelis, Louis Mink and Pat, Guy G. Nearing, Sigmund Neumann, Nam June Paik, Steve Paxton, Joe Peoples and Ruth, Henri Pousseur and Thea, Robert Rauschenberg, Norman Rudich and Linda, Pegeen Rumney, Louis Silverstein, Chaloner Spencer and Helen, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Doris, James Sykes and Clay, David R. Telson and Paula, William Robert Thompson and Mary, Connie

Wilson, Richard K. Winslow and Betty, Christian Wolff, Robert Wood and Marilyn, Ralph Pendleton, Carl Viggiani and Jane, David Gordon and Valda Setterfield, Mell Daniel and Minna, Mary Bauermeister, István Anhalt and Beata, Ralph Ferrara, C. H. Waddington, Robert H. Knapp and Johnsia, Mauricio Kagel and Ursula, Willard Lockwood and Louise, Richard Maxfield, Gira Sarabhai, Jose Gomez-Ibanez and Lidia, Emile De Antonio, Esther Dam, Benedicte Pesle, Richard Lippold and Louise, David McAllester and Susan, Toshi Ichianagi, Ihab Hassan, my father [John Milton Cage, Sr.] and mother [Lucretia Cage], Peggy Guggenheim, Nathan Shapira and Irene, Walter Van Tilburg Clark and Barbara, J. R. T. Bueno and Emily, David Tudor, Merce Cunningham, Earle Brown and Carolyn, Norman O. Brown and Beth, Samuel Green and Bunnie, Martha Gerhart, Marian Vaine, Ben Johnston and Betty, Paul Weiss, Johanna Alida Ribbelink, Clara Mayer, Marston Bates and Nancy, Tania Senff, Grace Bacon, Reginald Arragon and Gertrude, President and Mrs. Victor Butterfield.

—Manly Romero

Frederic Rzewski

Les Moutons de Panurge

In his studies at Harvard and Princeton, Rzewski learned from a who's who list of mid-century American composers including Randall Thompson, Roger Sessions, Walter Piston, and Milton Babbitt. At age 22 (in 1960), Rzewski traveled to Italy, where he spent the next ten years studying with Luigi Dallapiccola and performing new—and often, improvisatory—piano music. In 1966, he cofounded Musica Elettronica Viva, which conceived music as a collective, collaborative process, with improvisation and live electronic instruments prominently featured.

Although never for long periods, Rzewski has taught at the Conservatoire Royal de Musique in Liège, Belgium, Yale, the University of Cincinnati, the California Institute of the Arts, UC San Diego, the Royal Conservatory of The Hague and Trinity College of Music, London.

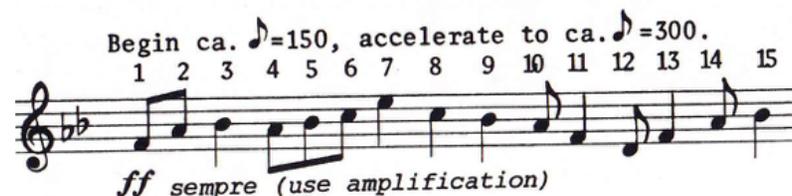
Rzewski's works are often political, focusing on issues including the perils of incarceration, the tension between government and citizens, the destruction of the working class, and gay rights. Perhaps his best-known composition, *The People United Will Never Be Defeated!* (36 variations on the Sergio Ortega song *El pueblo unido jamás será vencido*), is a set of virtuosic piano variations written as a companion piece to

Beethoven's "Diabelli Variations." Other titles of this sort include *The Price of Oil*, *North American Ballads* and the *Antigone Legend*, which opposes state policies and power and was premiered in April 1986 on the same night the U.S. bombed Libya.

A second theme among Rzewski's works stems from a viewpoint he expressed in a 1995 radio interview:

One of the interesting things about the art of writing in general ... is the possibility of expressing ideas in a very specific form, notating ideas very precisely, but at the same time in such a way that allows for a variety of possible interpretations, all of which may be equally interesting.

In *Les Moutons de Panurge*, Rzewski explores this theme. The work, dedicated to Frans Brüggen and written "For any number of musicians playing melody instruments, and any number of non-musicians playing anything," is notated on only two lines of music, beginning as pictured here.



Rzewski's performance instructions apply to all melody instruments in the ensemble:

Read from left to right, playing the notes as follows: 1, 1-2, 1-2-3, 1-2-3-4, etc. When you have reached note 65 [the final note], play the whole melody again and begin subtracting notes from the beginning: 2 through 65, 3 through 65, 4 through 65... 62-63-64-65, 63-64-65, 64-65, 65. Hold the last note until everybody has reached it, then begin an improvisation using any instruments.

Because the tempo is so fast, the instructions, though clear, are impossible to follow without error. The melodic sequence is not in itself difficult, but looping back to—or from—a shifting point again and again, faster and faster, pushes beyond the capabilities of the best performers. In fact, the errors are conceived as a part of the work. At some unknown point, each player will fall off from a perfect rendering. Rzewski's instructions continue: "if you get lost, stay lost. Do not try to find your way back to the fold."

The result is not unlike Minimalist phasing (for example, the rhythmic canons in Reich's *Tebillim*), however the exact relationship between individual instruments will be different in detail in every performance. Yet the overall shape will remain intact: all players start out in unison, the unison slowly unravels, eventually all players land on a single pitch, and a final improvisation concludes the work.

There is a certain tongue-in-cheek quality to this composition—its dependence on the failures of the group—which connects to the aphorism from which the title is drawn. The French expression “*moutons de Panurge*” (Panurge's sheep), from a story by the Renaissance writer Rabelais, describes people who blindly follow others regardless of the consequences, as the sheep in Rabelais' story do:

Suddenly, I do not know how, it happened, I did not have time to think, Panurge, without another word, threw his sheep, crying and bleating, into the sea. All the other sheep, crying and bleating in the same intonation, started to throw themselves in the sea after it, all in a line. The herd was such that once one jumped, so jumped its companions. It was not possible to stop them, as you know, with sheep, it's natural to always follow the first one, wherever it may go.

—Manly Romero

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

George Manahan (BM '73, MM '76), Conductor

George Manahan is in his ninth season as Director of Orchestral Activities at Manhattan School of Music, as well as Music Director of the American Composers Orchestra and the Portland Opera. He served as Music Director of the New York City Opera for fourteen seasons and was hailed for his leadership of the orchestra. He was also Music Director of the Richmond Symphony (VA) for twelve seasons.

Recipient of Columbia University's Ditson Conductor's Award, Mr. Manahan was also honored by the American Society of Composers and Publishers (ASCAP) for his “career-long advocacy for American composers and the music of our time.” His Carnegie Hall performance of Samuel Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* was hailed by audiences and critics alike. “The fervent and sensitive performance that Mr. Manahan presided over made the best case for this opera that I have ever encountered,” said the *New York Times*.

Mr. Manahan's guest appearances include the Orchestra of St. Luke's and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, as well as the symphonies of Atlanta, San Francisco, Hollywood Bowl, and New Jersey, where he served as acting Music Director for four seasons. He has been a regular guest with the Curtis Institute and the Aspen Music Festival, and has also appeared with the opera companies of Seattle, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Chicago, Santa Fe, Paris, Sydney, Bologna, St. Louis, the Bergen Festival (Norway), and the Casals Festival (Puerto Rico).

His many appearances on television include productions of *La Bohème*, *Lizzie Borden*, and *Tosca* on PBS. Live from Lincoln Center's telecast of New York City Opera's production of *Madama Butterfly*, under his direction, won a 2007 Emmy Award.

George Manahan's wide-ranging recording activities include the premiere recording of Steve Reich's *Tebillim* for ECM; recordings of Edward Thomas's *Desire Under the Elms*, which was nominated for a Grammy; Joe Jackson's *Will Power*; and Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*. He has conducted numerous world premieres, including Charles Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, David Lang's *Modern Painters*, Hans Werner Henze's *The English Cat*, Tobias Picker's *Dolores Claiborne*, and Terence Blanchard's *Champion*.

He received his formal musical training at Manhattan School of Music, studying conducting with Anton Coppola and George Schick, and was appointed to the faculty of the school upon his graduation, at which time the Juilliard School awarded him a fellowship as Assistant Conductor with the American Opera Center. Mr. Manahan was chosen as the Exxon Arts Endowment Conductor of the New Jersey Symphony the same year he made his opera debut with the Santa Fe Opera, conducting the American premiere of Arnold Schoenberg's *Von Heute Auf Morgen*.

ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

The Contemporary Performance Program at Manhattan School of Music is dedicated to giving advanced student performers the opportunity to study with expert faculty and to work directly with living composers. The CPP concert series presents knowledgeable performances of 20th- and 21st-century masterpieces by the student ensemble Tactus. Past concerts have featured both classic 20th-century repertoire by composers such as Webern, Schoenberg, Ives, Varèse, Cage, and Ligeti, and more recent music played with the composer present, including Steve Reich, Elliott Carter, Charles Wuorinen, Julia Wolfe, Jerome Kitzke, and Tania León. The group presents music by MSM faculty composers and works with the Composition department to read and perform student compositions.

Administration

Margaret Kampmeier

Artistic Director and Chair

Manly Romero

Administrative Director

Faculty

Margaret Kampmeier, Piano

David Adamcyk, Contemporary Survey

Robert Black, Double Bass

David Cossin, Percussion

Anthony de Mare, Piano

Danielle Farina, Viola

John Ferrari, Percussion

Jonathan Klibonoff, Chamber Music

David Krakauer, Clarinet

Michael Lowenstern, Bass Clarinet

Curtis Macomber, Violin

Tara O'Connor, Flute

Christopher Oldfather, Piano/Harpsichord

Todd Reynolds, Electronics

Lucy Shelton, Voice

Fred Sherry, Cello

UPCOMING

APR 12 | FRI

TACTUS, Contemporary Chamber Music

GREENFIELD | 7:30 PM