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The Contemporary Classical Music Community

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Signal, Reich kicks off June in Buffalo

Posted by [Rob Deemer](#) in [Contemporary Classical](#)

2010 celebrates 35 years of the new music festival [June in Buffalo](#) and the 25th year that it has been under the direction of composer David Felder. Based at the University of Buffalo, the festival has brought many leading composers and performers together since Morton Feldman started it in 1975 (a wonderful online exhibit on June in Buffalo has been put together by the UB Library and can be found [here](#)).



This year's festival kicked off last night with performances of Steve Reich's Sextet and Double Sextet by the chamber ensemble [Signal](#), who have quickly become a major force in today's new music scene. Reich was first featured at JiB in 1976 with performances of his *Clapping Music*, *Piano Phase*, *Drumming*, *Music for Pieces of Wood*, and *Music for 18 Musicians*, so this was a fitting tribute to Feldman's original concept.

That [Signal](#), under the direction of Brad Lubman, could put together a stellar performance of Reich's works did not come as a surprise – they have been methodically ticking off each of his major chamber works one by one since their inception in 2008. What was surprising, however, was the enthusiasm and unbridled joy with which they pulled the audience into the work; every single performer on both works seemed like they were having the time of their lives, and Lubman was practically dancing more than once during his conducting of the Double Sextet. Reich himself was not a passive listener; throughout both works he was huddled with [Signal](#)'s sound engineer, alternatively making subtle adjustments to the overall balance and leaning back to enjoy his creations. After having seen the performers at their most intense, it was gratifying to hear one of them explain to me afterwards that they had realized during the concert the immensity and honor of what they were doing – something I could tell that was not lost on the audience.

The full schedule of June in Buffalo, including performances by Ensemble SurPlus, Ensemble Laboratorium, Arditti Quartet, Slee Sinfonietta and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra featuring works by JiB senior faculty Augusta Read Thomas, Bernard Rands, Roger Reynolds, Oliver Pasquet and David Felder can be found [here](#).

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