

Rick Robinson - Biography

During 22 years playing double bass in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (DSO), **Rick Robinson** began attempting the difficult task of resetting the context of classical music in broader communities. Robinson began, however, in a fourth-generation musical family of Highland Park (MI). Then he began to lead as a bass student at Interlochen Arts Academy, Cleveland Institute of Music, New England Conservatory and summer festivals at Aspen and Spoleto. He held principal positions with both Akron and Canton symphony orchestras 1982-85, the Portland (ME) orchestra, as well as the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra directed then by composer John Williams.

Robinson won a small concerto competition in 1986, played solo recitals annually and informally studied conducting. As a substitute bassist for both the Boston and Detroit symphony orchestras, Robinson was offered and accepted DSO membership in 1989 to resolve a political demand by two Michigan state legislators for more African-American members. Intending to share hit symphonic music in new ways, in 1994 Robinson launched **CutTime Players**, a premiere eight-piece ensemble of DSO musicians performing his transcriptions for concert, educational, outreach and corporate events.

After Robinson started to publish these in 1997, he suddenly began composing (in fact, a work CSO is scheduled to perform in November 2021) and by the year 2010 launched a string sextet with optional drummer called **CutTime Simfonica**. By creating works that often blend urban dance grooves with conventional modes of classical expression, he has been realizing dialogues between the past and the present that are fun to perform and invite some audience participation. He won a Kresge Artist Fellowship for composition that same year and also began organizing the Detroit chapter of the worldwide **Classical Revolution** movement after first visiting the Cleveland chapter.

By 2012 Robinson (now aka **Mr. CutTime**) left the DSO sanctuary to develop and spread the gospel of *New Classical* nationally with young musicians, orchestras, music schools and new artistic partners, such as the street poets of the **Urban Requiem Project**. His development of **CutTime®** ensembles, music, methods and observations remain a golden opportunity to make classical music truly accessible and relevant in the eyes of a wider public. More information is available at cuttime.com.