

New Music Concerts 2017-2018 Season Index

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47th season | 389th event

Sunday October 22, 2017

The Music Gallery at the 918 Bathurst St. Centre, Toronto

New Music Concerts and **The Music Gallery** present:

MEITAR ENSEMBLE

PROGRAMME:

— *Illuminating Introduction @ 7:15; Concert @ 8:00* —

Ruben Seroussi (Israel b.1974)

Jazz...à propos de Matisse (1991)

for piano trio – Canadian Premiere

Philippe Leroux (France/Canada b.1959)

Prélude à l'épais (2017)

for quintet, commissioned by Arte Musica – World Premiere

Philippe Leroux

Postlude à l'épais (2016)

for quintet

— *Intermission* —

Uri Kochavi (Israel b.1988)

Penumbra (2017)

for flute and clarinet – World Premiere

Ofer Pelz (Israel b.1978)

marchons, marchons (2016)

for quintet – Canadian Premiere

Meitar Ensemble: Roy Amotz flute Gilad Harel clarinet Moshe Aharonov violin
Jonathan Gotlibovich cello Amit Dolberg piano, artistic director Pierre-André Valade conductor

Ruben Seroussi, composer and guitarist, was born in Montevideo, Uruguay in 1959 and settled in Israel in 1974. He finished his composition studies at Tel Aviv University's Academy of Music under the guidance of Leon Schidlowsky. His works, for various musical formations, have been performed in Israel by the best performers and orchestras, and are frequently performed abroad by well known ensembles. Important distinctions include: ISCM selection representing Israel in Warsaw 1992, two ACUM [Israeli performing rights society] prizes in 1992, a prize in the competition for an orchestral work held by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in 1993, the Prime Minister Prize for Composition in 1995 and the ACUM Prize for Life Achievement in 2012. In addition Seroussi is an active concert guitarist, who plays as recitalist, in chamber formations and as soloist in Israel and abroad. He has also recorded for such labels as Nuova Era and Meridian Records. Ruben Seroussi is on Faculty at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music, Tel-Aviv University, acting as Head of Composition Studies since 2004.

Ruben Seroussi (Israel b.1974)

Jazz...à propos de Matisse (1991)

The title refers to the book of paper cutouts that the painter Henry Matisse published in 1946 and which contains, in between the rhythmic and colourful plates, texts hand-written by the artist himself. He included these brush painted texts to ease the emotional tension the pictures create in the reader. The texts themselves – as marginal as they may seem – express somewhat prosaically the same poetic atmosphere that inspires the paper cutouts.

In my work I tried to create sound-pictures in sharp and variegated colours of an almost graphic and visual quality. My sound-pictures are set within a continuous musical prose which develops from being enigmatic and blurred to

the point where its shape is revealed as the inclination towards primary rhythmic perception in the spirit of “swing”. Throughout, as if in reaction to the irresistible pull of the basic rhythm, a musical pattern emerges in various guises from the deep lower register to the highest and lightest, leading toward the various “pictures” as a kind of musical-graphic metaphor. Towards the end of the piece, rather like the “contents” page in Matisse’s book, there is a short recapitulation of all the “pictures” in the composition, a mosaic-like impression which reinforces their plastic aspect and underscores their divergence from all musical process developing in time. — *Ruben Seroussi*

Philippe Leroux (b. 1959) entered the Paris Conservatory (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique) in 1978 and studied with Ivo Malec, Claude Ballif, Pierre Schäeffer and Guy Reibel and obtained three first prizes. Meanwhile, he followed classes with Olivier Messiaen, Franco Donatoni, Betsy Jolas, Jean-Claude Eloy and Iannis Xénakis. In 1993 he was selected to enter the Villa Medici in Rome for two years, where he remained until 1995. His compositional output (about seventy works to date) includes symphonic, vocal, electronic, acousmatic and chamber music. His music is widely performed in various European festivals by international orchestras and he has received numerous prizes and awards. In addition, Philippe Leroux writes articles on contemporary music, lectures and presents masterclasses internationally. From 2001 to 2006 he was a teacher in composition at IRCAM and in 2005 and 2006 he was professor at McGill University (a Fondation Langlois programme). From 2007 to 2009 he was composer-in-residence at Metz Arsenal and at the Orchestre National de Lorraine, then since 2009 to 2011, invited professor at Université de Montréal. In September 2011 he was appointed Associate Professor in composition at the Schulich School of Music, McGill University. He is currently composer-in-residence at Ensemble MEITAR in Tel-Aviv.

Philippe Leroux (France/Canada b.1959)

Prélude à l'épais (2017)

Prélude à l'épais (2017) is a commission from the Fondation Arte Musica for the Meitar Ensemble (flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano), and is inspired by a canvas from the Pierre Bourgie collection in Montreal: *The Annunciation* by Jan Provoost (16th century). My work asks the musicians to perform in a traditional manner on their instruments while at the same time drawing in space the letters of words accompanied by their corresponding vocal sounds. These letters come from a sentence of Paul Claudel taken from his play *The Announcement Made to Mary* which says, “Moi je rentre dans la nuit, par dessus ma nuit pour t’écouter.” The gestures of calligraphy in space are transformed towards the end of the work in a simulation of the gestures of painting as well as of the lines and directions suggested by the expressions, the lighting, and in general the tableau of this painting.

— *Philippe Leroux* (translation: Daniel Foley)

Philippe Leroux

Postlude à l'épais (2016)

Commissioned by the Meitar ensemble of Tel-Aviv, to whom the work is dedicated, *Postlude à l'épais*, for flute, clarinet, piano, violin and cello was composed in 2016. Like other works of mine that deal with a particular topic (*De la vitesse* for six percussionists, *De la disposition* for large orchestra, *De la texture* for ensemble...) *Postlude à l'épais* explores the notion of “musical density.” A memory is at the origin of the formal and harmonic processes that animate this piece. I was on a train. I was 17 years old. I had not slept that night and was tired. I remember falling asleep, my head against the window of the train, and seeing in my mind’s eye a flight of crows in the sky. When I awoke, a few minutes or a few hours later, I was in the same place, on the same train, but now rolling in the opposite direction and, in an amazing coincidence, as soon as my eyes opened they fell on a flight of identical crows, continuing the trajectory of the first flight, from the very place where they had stopped before my drowsiness. It was as if the two incidents were a single moment, uninterrupted, despite the passage of time and the change of direction of the train. The sleepiness had been like a breach, a breakthrough in the density of a temporal unfolding, which revealed another reality. *Postlude à l'épais* attempts to explore this feeling that a particular moment may possess more or less density. The work begins with a texture of high sonic density and particularly high temporal compactness, which is embodied in a harmony repeated very rapidly and first perceived in a granular form. These iterations are gradually spread out and slowed down. Then, during thirty transformations of this chord through the process of frequency modulation (based around the note “A”), another musical path is established, based this time on harmonic and timbral density. Superimposed lines of continuous and discontinuous sounds emerge based on the harmonic spectrum of the note “A,” opening a crack in time through the expansion of the original material. The stratified harmonic densities gently vanish, leaving only the piercing, infinite solitude of a horizontal desert. While the continuous slowdown of the harmonic process is relentless and inescapable, the structural intersections evolve very spontaneously and freely. In a way it’s like: “under the pavement lies the sand.” *Postlude à l'épais* is the third piece in a triptych that includes *Prélude à l'épais* and *L'épais*.

— *Philippe Leroux* (translation: Daniel Foley)

Uri Kochavi (b. 1988, Israel) is a composer, guitar player and improviser. He started his musical training as a jazz guitar player and earned his bachelor degree in composition from the Interdisciplinary composition department at the Jerusalem Academy of Music. Currently, he is pursuing a Master’s degree in composition at McGill University under the guidance of Prof. Philippe Leroux. Between 2014-2016 he was a member of the “Tedarim” project - the Meitar Ensemble program for outstanding young musicians in the field of contemporary music. As part of this program he has closely collaborated with the ensemble in different projects and received premieres in Israel and in Europe by the Ensemble and by the “Tedarim project” members. Uri is the recipient of the “Stern” fellowship and the Graduate Excellence Award from the Schulich School of Music at McGill

university, the "Philip Green" scholarship from the Jerusalem Academy and was the first place winner of the 36th "Gertrud Kraus" Competition in 2015. He is composer in residence of the Contemporary Music Ensemble at McGill University for 2017.

Uri Kochavi (Israel b.1988)

Penumbra (2017)

Penumbra – a space of partial illumination (as in an eclipse) between the perfect shadow on all sides and the full light. The compositional core of this work is the attempt to create a distinct linkage between the spatial and timbral aspects of a musical piece. The acoustic space in which the two performers act plays an important role in the unfolding of the composition, as it does not only affect the perception of the work, but concurrently depicts a salient attribute of the piece – the musical material is inextricably connected to physical location of the players, and the progression of the work is dependent on that relationship. Technically, the threshold between noise and distinct pitch, and the ability to form a symbiotic relationship between them, creates the sonic infrastructure of the work. The piece progresses through recurring gestural statements, which at first are seemingly detached from each other, almost indifferent. However, as the piece unfolds, they gradually converge into a collective statement. The gradual accumulation of the work concludes in a unification of space, sound and narrative. The composition was commissioned by Ensemble Meitar and it is dedicated to Gilad Harel and Roy Amotz. — *Uri Kochavi*

Ofer Pelz was born in Haifa (Israel) and lives in Montreal. His music explores the concept he defines as "unstable repetition" – repetitive fragments which always vary from repetition to repetition, all the while trying to keep a perceivable tension. Pelz composes music for diverse combinations of instruments and electroacoustic media and is also an active improviser. Ofer Pelz studied composition and music theory at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. Subsequently, he moved to Paris for three years in order to participate in music technology and instrumental composition courses at the Conservatory of Blanc-Mesnil, the Paris Conservatory and IRCAM. Currently, he is a doctoral candidate and teaches at the University of Montreal. The work of Ofer Pelz has been recognized with many international prizes and his music is played regularly in Europe, USA, Canada and Israel. Pelz has collaborated with several dance choreographers, among them the French choreographer François Raffinot.

Ofer Pelz (Israel b.1978)

marchons, marchons (2016)

Initially *marchons, marchons* was written for Expo Milano 2015, whose theme was "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life". It was while thinking of this notion of "nourishing the planet" that the thought of the disturbing words in *La Marseillaise* (1792) arose: "qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons!" [Let an impure blood soak our fields!], thereby re-interpreting the theme of the festival and giving it a critical turnaround, both social and political. In addition to the French national anthem, I chose an Israeli national song, in which there is a sentence similar to that of *La Marseillaise* – "the blood that springs/nourishes the soil." The piece is divided into two sections which correspond to each of these two quotations. It is their Morse code translation which serves as a musical foundation for the work. In each section, text and Morse code are treated differently, both rhythmically and conceptually; in the first, the rhythm of the code is used at a very slow tempo to mark the attack of a gesture of the entire ensemble. These gestures are repeated in a loop and their superpositions make the repetition particularly irregular. The second section is in perpetual movement played in quasi unison, in which the rhythmic Morse code determines the groupings of the musical gestures. The piece was completely revised for the Meitar Ensemble which premiered the piece at IRCAM Manifeste 2016. — *Ofer Pelz*

Meitar Ensemble

Praised by the NYTimes for their "excellence, poise and precision," the Meitar Ensemble, founded in 2004 by artistic director Amit Dolberg, has established itself as a prominent array of virtuosos specializing in contemporary music. Based in Tel-Aviv, they have been featured at some of the most prestigious venues worldwide, including the Centre Pompidou (Paris), the Purcell Room (London), the Radial System and has received the Binyaminy Award (2006), Partosh Award (2008), and the Landau Award (2010). The ensemble also won the Silver Palm award for Best Documentary at the 2010 Mexico International Film Festival for their historical performances at the Wannsee Villa, "Am Grossen Wannsee - The Wannsee Recordings", directed by Emre Amram Sonmez. The Meitar Ensemble has initiated a unique educational youth program, the Tedarim Project, offering young musicians in all fields (performance, conducting and composing) an opportunity to learn, explore and perform new music at the highest level. A special program for children "What's that noise?", contemporary music for--- the whole family has won great success and claimed many praises. In addition the ensemble has established CEME, New Music Festival and Master Courses for young professional musicians. Among their visiting guests are Ivan Fedele, Philippe Leroux, Fabian Panisello, Pierre-Andre Valade (conductor in residence) and members of the Ensemble Modern.

Pierre-André Valade, conductor

Pierre-André Valade was born in Corrèze, France in 1959. In 1991 he co-founded the Paris based Ensemble Court-Circuit of which he was Music Director for 16 years until 2008. He was Principal Conductor of Athelas Sinfonietta Copenhagen from 2009 to 2014. He currently has an active career as a guest conductor whilst continuing his relationship with Athelas Sinfonietta Copenhagen as a regular guest conductor. He was also appointed Principal Guest Conductor of Lyon based

Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain in 2013 and has held the position of Conductor in Residence of the Meitar Ensemble in Tel-Aviv since 2014. He is especially admired for his performances of repertoire from the 20th and 21st centuries, and receives regular invitations from major festivals and orchestras in Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Of his many recordings, Grisey's *Les Espaces Acoustiques* has been singled out for particular praise and won both the Diapason d'or de l'année 1999 and the Grand Prix de l'Académie Charles Cros, which he won again in 2008 for three other recordings. His more recent CDs include works by Hugues Dufourt (winner Diapason d'Or and Choc du Monde de la Musique), and Harrison Birtwistle's *Theseus Game* for Deutsche Grammophon, a piece he premiered in Duisburg and conducted at the Southbank Centre, BBC Proms, Huddersfield Festival, Lucerne International Festival and in Berlin.

47th season | 390th event

Sunday December 3, 2017

Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts presents:

CONCERTOS

Max Christie clarinet Eve Egoyan piano Ryan Scott percussion
NMC Ensemble directed by Robert Aitken

Programme:

Elliott Carter (USA 1908-2012)

String Trio (2011, Canadian premiere)

Accordes: Stephen Sitarski violin Doug Perry viola David Hetherington cello

Paul Frehner (Canada b.1970)

Clarinet Concerto "Cloak" (2016, World premiere)

Max Christie solo clarinet Doug Stewart flute Keith Atkinson oboe Fraser Jackson bassoon

Chris Gongos horn Jim Gardiner trumpet Ian Cowie trombone Rick Sacks percussion

Stephen Clarke piano/celeste Stephen Sitarski violin Doug Perry viola

David Hetherington cello Adam Scime contrabass Robert Aitken direction

— *Intermission* —

Linda C. Smith (USA/Canada b.1957)

Path of Uneven Stones (1986)

Eve Egoyan solo piano Doug Stewart flute Max Christie, Michele Verheul clarinets

Chris Gongos, Bardhyl Gjevori horns Ian Cowie trombone Rick Sacks percussion Erica Goodman harp

Stephen Sitarski, Carol Lynn Fujino violins Doug Perry viola Robert Aitken direction

Eve Egoyan is represented by Latitude 45 artist management

Robin de Raaff (Netherlands b.1968)

Percussion Concerto (2013)

Ryan Scott solo percussion Doug Stewart flute Keith Atkinson oboe Max Christie clarinet

Fraser Jackson bassoon Chris Gongos horn Jim Gardiner trumpet Ian Cowie trombone Rick Sacks percussion Stephen Clarke piano Erica Goodman harp Stephen Sitarski, Carol Lynn

Fujino violins Doug Perry viola

David Hetherington cello Adam Scime contrabass Robert Aitken direction

Elliott Carter (USA 1908-2012)

String Trio (2011, Canadian premiere)

Born in New York City on 11 December 1908, **Elliott Carter** began to be seriously interested in music in high school and was encouraged at that time by Charles Ives. With the explorations of tempo relationships and texture that characterize his music, Carter is recognized as one of the prime innovators of 20th-century music. The challenges of works such as the Variations for Orchestra, Symphony of Three Orchestras, and the concertos and string quartets are richly rewarding. In 1960, Carter was awarded his first Pulitzer Prize for his visionary contributions to the string quartet tradition. Stravinsky considered the orchestral works that soon followed, Double Concerto for harpsichord, piano and two chamber orchestras (1961) and Piano Concerto (1967), to be "masterpieces". Elliott Carter was the recipient of the highest honours a composer can receive: the Gold Medal for Music awarded by the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the National Medal of Arts, membership in the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and honorary degrees from many universities. Hailed by Aaron Copland as "one of America's most distinguished creative artists in any field," Carter received two Pulitzer Prizes and commissions from many prestigious organizations.

In planning to compose this string trio I realized that the viola had a more somber sound than the more brilliant violin and cello. While held like the violin, it is somewhat larger which forces the fingers that stop the strings to reach further for high notes. Therefore, I felt that I would make the viola have its own voice and be the most prominent member of the ensemble. The work is dedicated to Rolf Schulte, Richard O'Neill and Fred Sherry. It was composed in May, 2011. — *Elliott Carter*

Accordes evolved out of a string quintet that was formed in 1975 to perform a composition by John Beckwith. Frequently heard on CBC radio, they have performed on the Roy Thomson Hall Chamber Music Series and constitute the core string players of the New Music Concerts series. This concentration on contemporary music has allowed Accordes to give

Canadian, and sometimes world, premieres of works by such composers as Elliott Carter, Ben Johnston, Peter Paul Kropowski, Brian Cherney, Peter Michael Hamel, Michael Tippett, Henri Dutilleux, György Kurtág, Jörg Widmann, Ann Southam and Hope Lee. They have recorded extensively for the Canadian Music Centre label Centrediscs, including albums devoted to the music of Harry Freedman (*Spirit Song*), Harry Somers (*Somers String Quartets*, nominated for a JUNO award in 2001) and Alexina Louie (*Dénouement*). Their recording of NMC co-founder Norma Beecroft's *Amplified String Quartet with Tape* was nominated for a JUNO in 2004. Internationally, Accordes travelled to Cologne with Robert Aitken in 2004 to perform a program of Lithuanian music including works by Balakauskas, Kutavicius and *The Oriental Elegy* by Raminta Šerkšnytė, a NMC commission. More recently in 2013, under the auspices of Soundstreams, they travelled to Taiwan to perform Tan Dun's *Ghost Opera* and to Beijing for the Beijing Modern Music Festival.

Paul Frehner (Canada b.1970)

Clarinet Concerto "Cloak" (2016, World premiere)

Paul Frehner's works have been performed by an array of outstanding artists, ensembles, orchestras and opera companies including Almeida Opera, Aldeburgh Productions, Soundstreams Canada, Continuum New York, the OSM, The TSO, Esprit Orchestra, the Stuttgart Chamber Choir, Aventa Ensemble, the Prague Philharmonia, the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, the North Holland Philharmonic Orchestra, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, ECM+ and the Gryphon Trio. He has received numerous international and national awards for his compositions, including First Prize in the Jeunesses Musicales World Orchestra's International Composition Competition for *Overture 2000*, First Prize in the Prague Philharmonia's Symphony of the Third Millennium Composition Competition (2001) for his orchestral work *Elixirs*, Second Prize in the Genesis Prizes for *Opera* (2003), a Finalist Award in the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra's International Composers Award competition (2004) and the Claude Vivier National Award in the OSM' International Composition Competition for *Lila* (2007). In 2012 he was awarded the K.M. Hunter Artist Award in Classical Music administered by the OAC. Paul Frehner is on the Faculty of Music of Western University where he teaches composition and electroacoustic music and co-directs the Contemporary Music Studio. www.paulfrehner.com

My Concerto for Clarinet and Ensemble, subtitled "Cloak", explores a range of expression and technique in its three movements. The subtitle of the concerto is a nod toward the shadowy ambience evoked in espionage novels by authors like John le Carré and Olin Steinhauer, which are a source of inspiration for the mood of the work. The meaning of the subtitle also hints at something that is secret, or that is hidden from view.

In the first movement the clarinet's role is untraditional with regard to concerto form. Instead of occupying the role of the soloist, the clarinet, through most of the movement, plays a subtle, coloristic role, giving the overall instrumental timbre a shimmering quality through the use of multiphonics. These multiphonic sonorities have both harmonic and inharmonic properties in relation to the underlying harmony, causing soft beating patterns to emerge from the texture. There are two passages in the movement in which the clarinet has a more overtly soloistic role, hinting at what is to come. The clarinet is revealed as the soloist of the work in the second movement, where it plays a quasi-improvisatory and florid obbligato part over a contrapuntal accompaniment in the ensemble. The third movement resembles a more traditional concerto form with the focus moving between the soloist and ensemble in alternating passages. In the climax of the work, a theme that has been previously heard in various secondary guises over the first two movements emerges as perhaps the principle theme of the concerto, played here by the clarinet, violin and viola over a full accompaniment. In the concluding section motivic material from the first movement is revisited and played in alternation by the soloist and ensemble in new transformations, giving the listener a new perspective on the material. — *Paul Frehner*

Clarinetist **Max Christie's** career is defined by excellence and versatility. As comfortable in the soloist's role as he is in the orchestra, he is a gifted chamber musician as well an insightful experienced interpreter of the most important modern and contemporary works. Mr. Christie has performed and toured with the National Ballet Orchestra, where he holds the principal clarinet chair, as well as with the Canadian Opera Company, Esprit Orchestra and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared as soloist with the TSO, the Calgary Philharmonic, Esprit Orchestra, Kitchener Waterloo Symphony and the Windsor Symphony. The former principal clarinet of Esprit Orchestra, he remains a devoted champion of new music, especially by young Canadian composers. He has recorded and performed with the most prominent contemporary music ensembles in the country, including Toca Loca, Soundstreams, Continuum Contemporary Music, Array Music and New Music Concerts. His recording of Elliott Carter's music, including the solo work *Gra*, is available on the Naxos Label. *The Spawn of Abe*, a double concerto with oboe by MC Maguire, was released on the Innova label. He recorded with David Occhipinti on the disc *camera*, and with Patricia O'Callaghan on her release of the songs of George Gershwin. He has also recorded the music of Harry Somers and Rudolph Kourmorous. Contemporary solo performances include the works by Gavin Bryars, Anders Hillborg, Heather Schmitt and Michel Gonnevillle. On stage, he has accompanied some of the finest dancers in the country with the National Ballet of Canada and with Peggy Baker Dance Projects. Recently he branched out into the world of theatre, in a workshop production of *Charlotte Salomon: Life? or Theatre?* with Canadian Stage.

Linda C. Smith (USA/Canada b.1957)

Path of Uneven Stones (1986)

Linda Catlin Smith grew up in New York and lives in Toronto. She began her composition studies in high school in NY, with composer Allen Shawn, and continued her music studies at SUNY Stony Brook. In 1977, she traveled to Canada to study composition and theory with composers Rudolf Komorous, Martin Bartlett, John Celona, Michael Longton and Jo Kondo at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. She moved to Toronto in 1981 and in 1986, was invited by Morton Feldman to attend his lectures, as a guest, at SUNY/Buffalo, NY. Her music has been performed and/or recorded by: Tafelmusik,

Tectonics Festival (Glasgow), Trio Arbos (Madrid), Victoria, Kitchener-Waterloo and Vancouver Symphony Orchestras, Arraymusic, Tapestry New Opera, Via Salzburg, Evergreen Club Gamelan, and the Del Sol, Penderecki, and Bozzini string quartets, as well as by soloists including Eve Egoyan, Philip Thomas, Elissa Poole and Elinor Frey. Many of her compositions were supported by commissions through the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council and the Laidlaw Foundation. In 2005 her work *Garland* (for Tafelmusik) was awarded Canada's prestigious Jules Léger Prize. Recently several solo discs of her music have been released: *Thought and Desire*, with Eve Egoyan, and *Dirt Road and Drifter* on the label Another Timbre. A new cd will be released by Another Timbre in spring 2018. She has taught composition privately and at Wilfrid Laurier University (1999-present). www.catlinsmith.com

Path of Uneven Stones was commissioned by the Société de Musique Contemporaine de Québec (SMCQ) through the Canada Council for the Arts. Central to the work is the piano, which is soloistic, yet non-heroic - a kind of anti-concerto. Throughout the work there are moments where I was trying to create a thicker texture than often found in my work, though at other moments the work thins to almost nothing. The work explores melodic line, (sometimes several lines in layers), which have a slightly uneven rhythmic nature, a path where the stones are unevenly spaced perhaps, though there are places where evenness is paramount.

— Linda Catlin Smith

Pianist **Eve Egoyan** writes: Since the beginning of my career as an interpreter of new music I have been compelled and intrigued by Linda Catlin Smith's sound world, fascinated by the unusual elegance of her writing and her deep intuitive connection with the piano. In 1994, I commissioned Linda's *A Nocturne* (my first Canada Council commission) and included this work on my first solo album, *thethingsinbetween*, 1999. The Globe and Mail selected this disc as one of the top ten discs (all genres) of 1999. I have also performed and recorded *Ballad* (2006), Linda's work for cello and piano as well as the solo piano disc *Thought and Desire*, my most recent disc featuring works by Linda. *Thought and Desire* has garnered a broad range of critical acclaim internationally and was featured on columnist Alex Ross' "Nightafternight playlist". This autumn I have performed solo concerts at Transart, Italy; Unerhörte Musik, Germany; Klangspuren, Austria; Schloss Elmau, Germany; and ISCM, Vancouver. I have just returned from the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, U.K, where I was invited to perform a solo piano recital of works by Linda, a featured composer at the festival. Upcoming in Toronto, I will be releasing my twelfth solo disc, music by Maria de Alvear, at the Music Gallery this coming April. I am currently developing a multimedia project, *EarWitness*, for which I received New Chapters funding from the Canada Council for the Arts. *EarWitness* will be premiered in Toronto this coming June.

Robin de Raaff (Netherlands b.1968)

Percussion Concerto (2013)

Robin de Raaff (Breda, Netherlands b.1968) discovered his own diverse musical world through playing classical piano as well as bass guitar from a very early age. After being introduced to the legend and legacy of Jaco Pastorius, de Raaff's musical world expanded explosively as an instrumentalist. Parallel with this early development, de Raaff also created his own music and lyrics for his band where instrumental sections grew in significance, ultimately into completely scored instrumental works. These instrumental compositions led him to enroll as a student of composition. He first studied composition with Geert van Keulen at the Amsterdam Conservatory and later with Theo Loevendie, graduating cum laude in 1997. In 1999 de Raaff had the special privilege of being invited to work as George Benjamin's only composition student at the Royal College of Music in London where he also studied with Julian Anderson.

In 2000 de Raaff was invited to the renowned Tanglewood Music Center as the 'Senior Composition Fellow' which was the beginning of an ongoing relationship resulting in a series of commissions (Piano Concerto for the Festival of Contemporary Music and *Entangled Tales* for the Boston Symphony Orchestra) and performances of his septet *Ennea's Domein* and *Un Visage d'Emprunt*. Four CD's of de Raaff's music were issued in 2017, most recently with Jaap van Zweden conducting his Violin Concerto No. 1 "Angelic echoes" which was selected as the Best Orchestral Work of the year 2008 in the Dutch composition competition Toonzetters, and his Symphony No. 1 "Tanglewood Tales". For 17 years de Raaff has been professor of Composition and Instrumentation at the Composition Department at Codarts (former Rotterdam Conservatory of Music). www.robinderRaaff.com

The Percussion Concerto was partly written during a stay at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada in June 2013. It was commissioned by the American New Juilliard Ensemble (NJE) and the Dutch ensemble Insomnio. The NJE gave the world premiere of the Percussion Concerto on 1 April 2014 in the Lincoln Centre in New York, conducted by Joel Sachs and with Sae Hashimoto as soloist. Ten days later the first Dutch performance was given by Insomnio, with conductor Ulrich Pohl and percussionist Diego Espinosa. The ensemble, comprising 15 players, strives for maximal differentiation of sounds: single strings, harp and piano, an extensive percussion section, horn, trumpet, trombone, flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon alternate with piccolo and alto flute, alto oboe, bass clarinet, contra-bassoon vibraphone and gran cassa, amongst others. The register effects in the score are already anchored in the instrumentation itself. The soloist has a complete arsenal - bongos, a marimba, temple blocks, tomtoms and vibraslaps, amongst others. The ensemble percussionist has, amongst others, a glockenspiel and a vibraphone. In the first movement, the marimba is the central nervous system of the body of sound, the motor of the ensemble. A distinctive feature of the solo part are the upward gestures, involving ever wider intervals, that culminate in de Raaff's characteristic trills that multiply in the strings, harp and piano. The dramaturgy of the piece is created by strategic contrasts of texture between movements: the marimba dominates the first movement, the bongos,

tomtoms, big bass drum and vibraphone the second, and the solo cadenza for marimba, the third. The intertwining of the instruments goes so far that sounds seem to grow together, for example where the brass and wind stir up the vibraphone, where the soloist and the piano melt into one percussion part, or where the trumpet triggers a rapid descent in the tutti by means of rising and falling glissandi: the brass, low winds and white keys of the piano sink to the bottom in a crescendo glissando, while the high winds, harp, violins and violas climb upwards. The result is a cavernous effect, a counterpoint of registers, that gives the music a physiological dimension, and sets the percussion in the middle as protagonist, driver, seeker of both unity and conflict. The long solo cadenza with its particular performance instruction – ‘like a hum’ for the marimba – prepares the way for the dynamic finale, in which repeated pulse tones and tremolos underline the ‘physical’ character of the percussion’s music. — *Bas van Putten*

Leading Canadian percussionist Dr. **Ryan Scott** has been hailed as “Fierce and delicate...a chameleon-like virtuoso who triumphs over the varied colouristic demands and technical challenges” (Gramophone). As a marimba and multi-percussion soloist he has performed extensively in contemporary music festivals in Europe, Japan, China, Indonesia, South Africa, the UK and The Netherlands. He has also performed as guest soloist with Esprit Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Hyogo Performing Arts Centre Orchestra, the Austin Symphony and numerous other orchestras and chamber ensembles across North America. Ryan is a stalwart figure in the Toronto contemporary music community and has performed in over 300 world premieres. In addition to his work as a regular guest artist with NEXUS, Principal Percussionist of Esprit Orchestra and percussionist in the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra since 1996, he is also a sought-after chamber musician and teacher. A core member of Continuum Contemporary Music, he also serves the organization as Artistic Director. His live recording of three Maki Ishii percussion concertos with Esprit Orchestra (Innova 809) elevated Ryan to international acclaim in 2011. He studied with Russell Hartenberger and Robin Engelman at the University of Toronto and serves on the faculty at the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. Ryan is married to harpist Sanya Eng, and lives in Toronto with their three children.

47th season | 391st event

Sunday January 14, 2018

Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts presents:

Kammerkonzert

Duo Diorama: MingHuan Xu violin Winston Choi piano

NMC Ensemble directed by Robert Aitken

Programme:

Michael Oesterle (Canada b.1968)

Chamber Concerto (2017, World premiere)

for violin, piano and 13 winds

New Music Concerts commission in cooperation with Daniel Cooper

Arnold Schoenberg (Austria/USA 1874-1951)

Phantasy Op. 47 (1949)

for violin and piano

— Interval —

Alban Berg (Austria 1885-1935)

Kammerkonzert (1923-25)

for violin, piano and 13 winds

Duo Diorama:

MingHuan Xu violin Winston Choi piano

New Music Concerts Ensemble:

Dianne Aitken piccolo Douglas Stewart flute Keith Atkinson oboe

Cary Ebli cor anglais Max Christie, Colleen Cook clarinets Michele Verheul bass clarinet

Peter Lutek bassoon Fraser Jackson contrabassoon James Gardiner trumpet

Christopher Gongos, Bardhyl Gjevori horns Ian Cowie trombone

Robert Aitken direction

Michael Oesterle (Canada b.1968)

Chamber Concerto (2017, World premiere)

My Chamber Concerto is a single-movement work, with a duration of approximately 19 minutes. The instrumentation of this piece is for Piano and Violin with 13 Wind Instruments: identical to the instrumentation of Alban Berg's masterpiece, "Kammerkonzert." With thanks, I dedicate this work to Daniel Cooper who had the brilliant, albeit intimidating, idea of mirroring Berg's instrumentation.

The pretext for my Chamber Concerto is straightforward, an aesthetic struggle between the violinist and the pianist. Throughout the piece they engage in a rhapsodic skirmish as they vie to outshine one another, shamelessly enlisting members of the wind band to their respective camps. For instance, it becomes clear that the violin and the English Horn are well companioned while the trombone is easily allied to the piano's faux big-band sensibility. The fracas comes to a boil, when surprisingly, a short truce ensues during which the duelling soloists set aside their virtuosity, yet still find ways to charm the remaining winds into joining their respective companies. The lull is short lived. Once again, the lines of battle redrawn, the action accelerates to a whirl of one-upmanship, until the winds, exhausted, abandon the fight, leaving the violin and piano on their own to sulk. Alban Berg's Kammerkonzert was among the first pieces of music I studied. Over the years I have periodically returned to the Kammerkonzert score only to face the same remembrance: In a casual conversation with Milton Babbitt I complained, "I'll never be able to write anything as ingenious as this piece." "You're right," was his reply. — *Michael Oesterle*

Michael Oesterle, born in 1968, is a Canadian composer living in Deux-Montagnes Québec.

Arnold Schoenberg (Austria/USA 1874-1951)

Phantasy Op. 47 (1949)

In March 1949 Arnold Schoenberg, who had emigrated to the USA in 1933, composed a 'piece for violin solo, accompanied by the piano' at the behest of the violinist Adolph Koldofsky; at this time he was also composing the choral pieces *Dreimal tausend Jahre* and *Israel Exists Again*. The method of composition, which can be clearly determined from the manuscript sources, reveals that the soloistic nature of the violin part – both conceptually and as indicated in the title – should be taken at face value: Schoenberg first wrote out the complete violin part (which he completed on 22nd March 1949) before finishing the piano accompaniment a week later. For the first performance, in the context of his 75th birthday on 13th September 1949, Schoenberg provided an alternative ending for Koldofsky, who performed the piece and whom the composer regarded as an ideal interpreter.

In coarse schematic terms the Phantasy is divided into four parts: a motif-forming section with transition (the main idea in the work is six bars long), a Lento section that could be compared to the slow movement of a sonata, a scherzando passage and a coda (each with transitions). The Phantasy undeniably possesses a certain classical, Viennese tone; this expressive aesthetic is, for instance, sometimes nourished by dance-like triple metres of which counterparts can be found in similarly violinistic writing from Schubert to Mahler. The technical variety of the delicate soundscape ranges from double-stopping of extremely large intervals, glissandi, pizzicati and harmonics to complicated tremolo effects and dynamically differentiated chord arpeggios.

– *Therese Muxeneder, Arnold Schoenberg Center*

Alban Berg (Austria 1885-1935)

Kammerkonzert (1923-25)

Alban Berg's dedicatory letter to Schoenberg was first printed in the Viennese musical magazine 'Pult und Taktstock' (February 1925).

9th February 1925

My dear honoured friend Arnold Schoenberg!

The composition of this Concerto, dedicated to you on your fiftieth birthday, has been completed only today, on my fortieth birthday. Though late presented, I beg you nonetheless to accept it in a spirit of friendship; all the more so since it has also turned out – though unintended from the start – to be a little memorial to a friendship now twenty years old. In a musical motto that precedes the first movement the letters of your name, Webern's and my names have been captured – as far as is possible in musical notation – in three themes (or motifs) which have been allotted an important role in the melodic development of this music. This already announces a *trinity of events*, and such a trinity – it is after all a matter of your birthday, and all the good things, that I wish you, makes three – is also important for the whole work.

The three parts of my Concerto, united in a single movement, are characterized by the following three headings or tempo indications:

I Thema scherzando con variazioni

II Adagio

III Rondo ritmico con Introduzione (cadenza)

A *particular sound body* is proper to each of these, whereby I have made use of the trinity of available instrumental families (keyboard, stringed, and wind instruments). First the piano (I), then the violin (II), and finally both of the concertante instruments are set against the accompanying wind ensemble. The ensemble itself (which with the violin and the piano makes up a chamber orchestra *fifteen* strong – a holy number for this kind of instrumental combination since your Opus 9) consists of: piccolo, flute, oboe, cor anglais, clarinets in E-flat and A, bass clarinet, bassoon, double bassoon; two horns, trumpet and trombone. *Formally* too the number three or its multiples keeps cropping up: In the *first* movement we find a six-fold recurrence of the same basic idea. This idea, stated like an exposition by the wind ensemble as a ternary variations theme of 30 bars, is repeated by the piano alone in the virtuoso character of that instrument, thus constituting a first variant (first reprise). Variation 2 presents the melody notes of the 'theme' in inversion: variation 3 uses them in retrograde order; and variation 4 uses the inversion of the retrograde form (these three middle variations can be regarded as a sort of development section in this 'sonata first movement'). The last variation returns to the theme's basic shape. But this occurs in the form of stretti between piano and wind ensemble (these are canons in which a group of voices that enters later tries to overtake another group that entered first, succeeds in doing this, flies past and leaves the first group far behind), so this last variation (or reprise) also acquires a totally new shape, corresponding to its simultaneous position as coda. It is not really necessary to draw attention to this fact, since obviously every one of these transformations of the theme has its own profile, although – and it does seem important to say this – the scherzo character predominates throughout this first part. The structure of the *Adagio* is also based on 'ternary song form': A1-B-A2 where A2 is the inversion of A1. The repetition of this first half of the movement (120 bars) takes place in retrograde form, partly a free formation of the reversed thematic material, but partly – as for example the whole of the middle section B – in the form of an exact mirror image.

The third movement, finally, is an amalgamation of the two preceding movements (see the tabular general survey!). As a consequence of the repetition of the variation movement that this necessitates – although it is enriched by the simultaneous reprise of the Adagio – the architectonic construction of the whole Concerto also manages to be ternary in form.

The uniting of movements I and II produced three important methods of combination:

1. free counterpointing of the parts corresponding to one another;
2. the successive juxtaposition of individual phrases and little sections, like a duet, and

3. the exact summation of whole passages from both movements.

The problem of collecting all these disparate components and characters under one roof (just think, honoured friend: on the one hand a variation movement of circa nine minutes duration, scherzoso throughout, and on the other a broadly sung, extended Adagio lasting a quarter of an hour!), of making a new movement out of them with a quite independent tone, resulted in the form of the 'Rondo ritmico'. *Three rhythmic forms*: a main rhythm, a subsidiary rhythm, and a rhythm that can be considered as a sort of motif, are laid under the melody, notes of the main and subsidiary voices. The rhythms occur with manifold variations – extended and abbreviated, augmented and diminished, in stretto and in reverse, and in all imaginable metrical shifts and transpositions, etc., etc. Thematic unity is obtained by means of these rhythms and their recurrence according to the design of the Rondo. This unity is nowise inferior to that of the old Rondo form, and guarantees the relatively easy 'intelligibility' – if I may make use of one of your technical terms – of the musical action.

It was in a scene in my opera *Wozzeck* that I showed for the first time the possibility of this method of allotting such an important *constructive* rôle to a rhythm. But that a degree of thematic transformation on the basis of a rhythm such as I have attempted in the Rondo under discussion is admissible, was proved to me by a passage in your Serenade, where in the last movement (admittedly for quite different motives) you place a number of motifs and themes from preceding movements on rhythms that do not belong to them from the start; and vice versa. And I have just read an article by Felix Greissle (Anbruch, February 1925) about the formal foundations of your Wind Quintet in which he writes, among other things, in the last sentence 'The theme always has the same rhythm, but in each case it is made up of notes from a different series', and this seems to me to be further proof of the rightness of such a rhythmic method of construction.

The choice of *time signatures* provided another means of setting the finale of my Concerto on its own feet (despite the fact that all the notes are dependent on those of the first two movements). The whole of the variations movement was in *triple* time; the Adagio is predominantly in *duple* time; the Rondo on the other hand is constantly changing between all conceivable even and odd, simple and compound metres, so that in the metrical field too I accentuated the ever recurrent trinity of events. This is also expressed in the harmony: besides the long stretches of completely dissolved tonality, there are individual shorter passages with a tonal flavour, and also passages that correspond to the laws set up by you for 'composition with twelve notes related only to one another'. Finally I should mention that the *number of bars*, both in the whole work and in the individual sections, was also determined by divisibility by three; I realize that – insofar as I make this generally known – my reputation as a mathematician will grow in proportion (. . . to the square of the distance) as my reputation as a composer sinks.

But seriously: if in this analysis I have spoken almost exclusively of things connected with the number three, this is because, firstly, it is just those aspects that will be ignored by everybody (in favour of other more musical aspects); secondly, because as an author it is much easier to speak about such external matters than about inward processes, in which respect this Concerto is certainly no poorer than any other music. I can tell you, dearest friend, that if it became known how much friendship, love, and a world of human and spiritual references I have smuggled into these three movements, the adherents of programme music – should there be any left – would go mad with joy; and the representatives and defenders of 'New Classicism', and 'New Matter-of-factness', the 'Linearists' and 'Physiologists', the 'Counterpointists' and 'Formalists' would rush to attack me, outraged by my 'romantic' leanings, if I were to let slip the fact that they too – if they take the trouble to seek out their respective references – are taken into account in the work.

For it was in the intention of this dedication really to bring you 'all good things' on your birthday, and the 'Concerto' is the very art form in which not only the soloists (including the conductor!) have the chance of show off their brilliance and virtuosity, the author can too, for once. Many years ago, honoured friend, you advised me to write such a work, if possible with chamber orchestral accompaniment; it never crossed your mind then (or perhaps it did?!) that with this piece of advice – as with everything you said and did – you were anticipating a time when just this genre would awake to new life. And, as I hand it to you now to mark a three-fold jubilee as I said at the outset, I can hope to have found one of those 'better occasions' of which you wrote prophetically in your *Harmonielehre*:

'And so this movement too will perhaps return to me once more.'

Your ALBAN BERG
Translation: Cornelius Cardew

DUO DIORAMA comprises Chinese violinist MingHuan Xu and Canadian pianist Winston Choi. MINGHUAN XU performs extensively in recital and with orchestra in China and North America. She is also a highly sought-after chamber musician, having collaborated with the St. Petersburg Quartet, Colin Carr, Eugene Drucker, Ilya Kaler, and Ani Kavafian. She delights audiences wherever she performs with her passion, sensitivity and charisma. Xu was a winner of the Beijing Young Artists Competition and gave her New York debut at age 18 as soloist with the New York Youth Symphony Orchestra. Currently on faculty at Loyola University Chicago and the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University, she plays on a 1758 Nicolas Gagliano violin. WINSTON CHOI was Laureate of the 2003 Honens International Piano Competition (Canada) and winner of France's 2002 Concours International de Piano 20e siècle d'Orléans. He regularly performs in recital and

with orchestra throughout North America and Europe. Already a prolific recording artist, he can be heard on the Albany, Arktos, Crystal Records, empreintes DIGITales, Intrada and QuadroFrame labels. He is Associate Professor and Head of Piano at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University.

47th season | 392nd event

Sunday February 4, 2018

Gallery 345, 345 Sorauren Avenue, Toronto

New Music Concerts presents:

LAND'S END ENSEMBLE

John Lowry violin Beth Root Sandvoss cello Susanne Ruberg-Gordon piano
with special guests Robert Aitken flute James Campbell clarinet

Introduction @ 7:15 hosted by David Jaeger | Concert @ 8:00

Programme:

Hope Lee (Taiwan/Canada b.1953)

Imaginary Garden VII (2017)

for flute, violin, cello and piano (Toronto premiere)

Sean Clarke (Canada b.1983)

Delirium Nocturnum (2017)

for flute, violin, cello and piano (Toronto premiere)

Matthew Ricketts (Canada b.1986)

Graffiti Songs (2010)

for flute, violin, cello and piano

— *Intermission* —

Arnold Schoenberg (Austria/USA 1874-1951)

Kammersymphonie Op. 9 (1906)

for flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano

1922 chamber arrangement by **Anton Webern** (Austria 1883-1945)

Hope Lee (Taiwan/Canada b.1953)

Imaginary Garden VII (2017)

Hope Lee is a Canadian composer of Chinese origin. As a “cross-cultural explorer”, her work often reflects her interdisciplinary interests and her views of creativity as an endless adventure of exploration, research and experimentation; a challenge to one’s breadth and depth. “Things change constantly and continuously” she says, “therefore each work should be approached from a fresh angle. Growth is a natural phenomenon reflected in my compositional technique. Not unlike disciplined organic growth – a most fascinating phenomenon – it is the secret of life, the source of true freedom.”

Hope Lee received formal music training at the McGill University in Montréal and at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany as a recipient of a DAAD scholarship and a Canada Council Grant. Her main teachers in composition are Bengt Hambraeus, Brian Cherney and Klaus Huber. Between 1987-90, she studied Chinese traditional music and poetry, as well as computer music in Berkeley, California.

Imaginary Garden, a sonic garden of discovery, growth, imagination and recollection, is a series of short chamber pieces written for unusual instrumental combinations, with the intention of exploring musical gestures with motion, images, and emotion.

Imaginary Garden VII ...until another year, another bloom... is written for flautist Robert Aitken and Land's End Ensemble.

“God gives us memories that
we have rose gardens in winter”
— Obituary, Rosalind W.Y. Lee (1927-2017)

—Hope Lee

Sean Clarke (Canada b.1983)

Delirium Nocturnum (2017)

Sean Clarke is a composer, theorist and flutist from Calgary, Alberta. Having previously studied flute and composition at the Royal Northern College of Music, England and the University of Calgary, he completed a doctorate in instrumental composition at the University of Montréal under the co-direction of Ana Sokolovic and Jonathan Goldman. His works have been played in the United States, France, and across Canada, and his theory research has been featured at numerous regional and national conferences. Sean is the recipient of a Joseph-Armand Bombardier Doctoral Scholarship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Delirium Nocturnum depicts a feverish range of emotional states and cycles through five different sections: a lamenting *Dirge*, a lyrical *Aria*, a grotesque *Caprice*, a strident *Fanfare*, and a fiery *Allegro con fuoco*. Each section is transformed over the course of the piece, as when the *Fanfare* returns only to morph into a delicate duet between the violin and flute, or when the *Caprice* becomes light and dance-like before leading to a lively *moto perpetuo*. Midway through the piece the *Aria* slowly builds to a roar, before the *Allegro* that had previously failed to gain any traction takes over the work. During this last tumultuous section, elements of the *Caprice*, *Aria* and *Fanfare* all make final appearances. —

Sean Clarke

Matthew Ricketts (Canada b.1986)

Graffiti Songs (2010)

Matthew Ricketts is a Canadian composer. A graduate of McGill University's Schulich School of Music (B.Mus. 2009) and Columbia University (DMA 2017), Matthew has studied with Brian Cherney, John Rea, Chris Paul Harman, George Lewis and Fred Lerdahl. His music has been featured on festivals and concerts across North America and in Europe. Ricketts is the recipient of numerous awards for his compositions, including eight prizes in the SOCAN Foundation's Awards for Young Composers. Matthew is currently collaborating with renowned writer and playwright Tomson Highway on a multilingual chamber opera to be toured throughout Nunavik and Côte-Nord. Matthew is Composer/Collaborator-in-Residence at East Carolina University's New Music Initiative, 2016-2018.

Graffiti Songs was composed using scraps from several unfinished or early pieces of mine – namely, the completed movement of an unfinished larger piano piece (incidentally one of the first pieces I wrote, in my last year of High School) as well as an even more unfinished descending chord sequence (sketches for raw material of an incomplete and largely un-started orchestra piece, this one more recent and dating from the end of my undergrad).

I was struck by the similarity of these pieces, and although my music has changed a good deal since those early pieces, both the harmonic material of my early Piano Prelude and the sketches for the orchestral piece *Still Burning* were largely diatonic and mostly rooted in quintal – that is, finding various ways to vertically and horizontally fetishize the interval of a fifth – material. I thus conceived of this piece as a sort of mashing-together of these two pieces, one from the start of my interest in composition and the other quite recent. Materials from both pieces are used throughout and constantly allowed to interact with each other – in this way, both the piece itself and my compositional process drew on the process of “defacing” or sketching atop existing material, so that the earlier material serves as an original document on top of which this music now scribbles, inscribes, vandalizes or comments – hence, Graffiti songs.

This piece was written in the summer of 2010, at the request of flautist, friend and all-around incredible musician Jeff Stonehouse, as well as his Ensemble Paramirabo, to whom it is most warmly dedicated.

— Matthew Ricketts

Arnold Schoenberg (born Vienna 13 September 1874, died Los Angeles 13 July 1951) was a revolutionary Austrian composer and painter, associated with the expressionist movement in German poetry and art, and the leader of the Second Viennese School of composition. Schoenberg was admired early in his career for simultaneously extending the traditionally opposed German Romantic styles of Brahms and Wagner. Later, his name would come to personify radical innovations in atonality (Schoenberg preferred the term *pan-tonality*) that would become the most polemical feature of 20th-century art music. In the 1920s, Schoenberg developed the twelve-tone technique, an influential compositional method of manipulating an ordered series of all twelve notes in the chromatic scale. Following the election of the Nazi Party in 1933 Schoenberg's works were denounced as degenerate Jewish music and he left Berlin for the United States in 1934. Schoenberg was also a painter, an important music theorist, and an influential teacher of composition; his students included Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Hanns Eisler, Egon Wellesz, and later John Cage, Lou Harrison, Earl Kim, Leon Kirchner, and other prominent musicians. Many of Schoenberg's practices, including the formalization of compositional method and his insistence that audiences should listen analytically are echoed in avant-garde musical thought throughout the 20th century.

Schoenberg singled out his *Kammersymphonie Op.9* as a "true turning point" in his compositional style: "After having finished the composition of the 'Kammersymphonie' it was not only the expectation of success which filled me with joy. It was another and a more important matter. I believed I had now found my own personal style of composing and that all problems [...] had been solved and that a way had been shown out of the perplexities in which we young composers had been involved through the harmonic, formal, orchestral and emotional innovations of Richard Wagner" ("How One Becomes Lonely", 1937). Completed on 25 July 1906, the symphony was "the last work of my first period that existed as a single through-composed movement." The extended tonality of Schoenberg's E-major symphony is remarkable for its prominent use of a principal theme based the interval of the perfect fourth. Originally scored for an ensemble of ten wind instruments pitted against five solo strings, the premiere in Vienna's venerable 'Großer Musikvereinssaal' on 8 February 1907 provoked Richard Strauss (at that time a benefactor of Schoenberg) among others to complain that the instrumentation of the ensemble was not suitable "for large orchestral concerts without soloists" and "must absolutely be played in a smaller hall." Schoenberg subsequently planned several alternative versions of the work and also assigned his acolyte Alban Berg to create an edition for two pianos. Between 1922 and 1923, Schoenberg's disciple Anton Webern made two different arrangements of this composition; the first of these was scored for violin, flute, clarinet, cello, and piano and was performed alongside the similarly scored *Pierrot Lunaire* (1921) at a concert in Barcelona in 1925.

— Daniel Foley

LAND'S END ENSEMBLE

Juno-nominated Land's End Ensemble of Calgary (John Lowry, violin; Beth Root Sandvoss, cello; Susanne Ruberg-Gordon, piano; Vincent Ho, Artistic Director) is dedicated to introducing audiences to new music by Canadian and International composers, and to performing landmark chamber works of the 20th and 21st centuries. Over the years, LE Ensemble has featured an extraordinary array of guest artists, including Hans Graf, James Campbell, Joel Sachs, Onalea Gilbertson, Barry Shiffman, Robert Aitken, François Houle, Laura Jayne Bowler and many others. The ensemble has performed the works of over a hundred Canadian and Alberta composers; in addition LE Ensemble sponsors a nation-wide Composers Competition annually in partnership with the University of Calgary. LE's discography includes two winners of the Western Canadian Music Award for Outstanding Classical Recording, as well as a Juno nomination for *My Life in Widening Circles*, music by R. Murray Schafer.

SUSANNE RUBERG-GORDON piano

Quoted by the Chronicle Herald as "A superb musician", Swedish-born pianist Susanne Ruberg-Gordon is a highly regarded chamber musician and collaborative artist. She has performed with artists such as Andres Cardenes, Andras Diaz, Ron Leonard, James Campbell, Desmond Hoebig, Ian Swensen, Alain Trudel, Jens Lindemann, Ning Feng, Catherine Monoukian, Ni Tao, Arnold Choi and Nikki Chooi.

JOHN LOWRY violin

John Lowry has been Associate Concertmaster of the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra since 1987. He was Concertmaster of the Edmonton Symphony for the 2002-2003 season, and has served as Guest Concertmaster of orchestras in Halifax, Winnipeg, Kitchener-Waterloo, Red Deer, and the Adelaide Symphony of South Australia.

BETH ROOT SANDVOSS cello

Cellist Beth Root Sandvoss has a notably varied career as a recitalist, chamber musician and pedagogue. Beth's early professional activities took her to Hong Kong, where she became a member of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra as well as the Victoria String Quartet, performing throughout Asia.

ROBERT AITKEN flute

World renowned Canadian flutist, composer and conductor Robert Aitken has been honoured with the Order of Canada and is a Chevalier de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres (France). He has more than 70 recordings to his credit and such notables as John Cage, George Crumb, Elliott Carter, Toru Takemitsu, Gilles Tremblay, John Beckwith and Bruce Mather have dedicated works to him. In 2003 he was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Flute Association (USA) and in 2009 received the prestigious Walter Carsen Prize for Excellence in the Performing Arts. His compositions are published by Universal Edition, Salabert, Ricordi and Peer Music. Robert Aitken was director of the Banff Centre Winter Program in Music, founder and artistic director of Music Today, Music at Shawnigan and co-founder, with Norma Beecroft, of New Music Concerts which he has directed since its inception in 1971.

JAMES CAMPBELL clarinet

James Campbell has followed his muse to five television specials, more than 40 recordings, over 30 works commissioned, a Juno Award, Canada's Artist of the Year, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and Canada's highest honour, the Order of Canada. Campbell has performed as soloist and chamber musician in over 30 countries with string quartets, orchestras and luminaries like the Boston Pops, London Symphony, the Guarneri, Allegri and St Lawrence Quartets, Glenn Gould and Aaron Copland. Campbell has been Artistic Director of Ontario's Festival of the Sound since 1984 and is Professor of Music at the prestigious Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University.

47th season | 393rd event
Sunday February 25, 2018
Gallery 345, 345 Sorauren Avenue, Toronto
New Music Concerts presents:

TRIO ARKEL

Marie Bérard violin Teng Li viola Winona Zelenka cello

Special Screening @ 6:30:

My War Years: Arnold Schoenberg
(A Larry Weinstein Production)

Concert @ 8:00

Programme:

Kaija Saariaho (Finland b.1952)

Cloud Trio (2009)

Krzysztof Penderecki (Poland b.1933)

String Trio (1990-91)

— *Intermission* —

James Rolfe (Canada b.1961)

And Then Grace (2000)

Arnold Schoenberg (Austria/USA 1874-1951)

String Trio, Op.45 (1946)

Kaija Saariaho (Finland b.1952)

Cloud Trio (2009)

Kaija Saariaho is a prominent member of a group of Finnish composers and performers who are now, in mid-career, making a worldwide impact. Born in Helsinki in 1952, she studied at the Sibelius Academy with the pioneering modernist Paavo Heininen and in Freiburg with Brian Ferneyhough and Klaus Huber, attended the Darmstadt summer courses, and, from 1982, worked at the IRCAM research institute in Paris. At IRCAM, Saariaho developed techniques of computer-assisted composition and acquired fluency in working on tape and with live electronics. Saariaho was also influenced by the French 'spectralist' composers, whose techniques are based on computer analysis of the sound-spectrum. This analytical approach inspired her to develop her own method for creating harmonic structures. More recently Saariaho has turned to vocal music, with outstanding success. Her opera *L'Amour de loin* received widespread acclaim in its premiere production directed by Peter Sellars at the 2000 Salzburg Festival, and won the composer a prestigious Grawemeyer Award. The experience of writing for voices has led to a simplification of Saariaho's language, with a new vein of modally oriented melody accompanied by more regular repeating patterns. In the profusion of large and small works which Saariaho has produced in recent years, two features which have marked her whole career continue to stand out. One is a close and productive association with individual artists; the other is a concern, shown equally in her choice of subject matter and texts and in the profusion of expression marks in her scores, to make her music not a working-out of abstract processes but an urgent communication from composer to listener of ideas, images and emotions.

A string trio is a fascinating ensemble. Even if its instruments come from the same family it magnifies the

individual characters of each. When writing the trio, I was surprised how different it was to writing for a string quartet. In this piece, the three instruments all have different tasks and functions, they represent very different aspects of string playing. These tasks are sometimes very concrete: the violin tends to behave as an echo or reverberation, the viola creates new clouds next to the existing ones and the cello often has a function of a shadow to the upper instrumental lines.

My ideas for this piece are about common textures; how to create one coherent texture – still complex and detailed – with individual lines. The four sections of the piece have their own colours and characters, and I leave it to the listener to imagine what kinds of clouds were their sources of inspiration.

Why *Cloud Trio*? When composing this piece in the French Alps (Les Arcs), watching the big sky above mountains I realized once again how rich a metaphor a natural element can be: its state or shape is so recognizable, and yet it is always varied and rich in detail. *Cloud Trio* is written for and dedicated to the Zebra Trio. — *Kajja Saariaho*

Krzysztof Penderecki (Poland b.1933)**String Trio** (1990-91)

A violinist and pianist by training, **Krzysztof Penderecki** studied composition with Artur Malewski and Stanislas Wiechowicz at the Krakow Academy of Music where he was subsequently appointed as professor in 1958. He rapidly acquired international fame with his first works in the serial vein (*Strophen*, 1959; *Anaklasis*, 1960). Microtonal intervals, clusters and glissandos characterize his influential sound-mass compositions of the 1960s such as his *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* (1960) and *Passion According to Saint Luke* (1966). In the 1970s these avant-garde gestures were abandoned in favour of post-romantic simplicity and conventional forms such as concertos and symphonies. Penderecki's celebrity also grew through his operas (*The Devils of Loudun*, 1969) and in the cinema, where his music was used by directors such as Stanley Kubrick and Martin Scorsese. Extensive political-social associations can also be found in his epic *Polish Requiem* which he began in 1980. In 1972, Penderecki was appointed as rector of the State Academy of Music in Krakow and also taught at Yale University in the USA from 1973 to 1978. Penderecki has gained an international reputation as the conductor of both his own compositions and other works and has been rewarded with doctorates and honorary professorships from dozens of universities and conservatories around the world.

Penderecki's dramatic and lyrical "String Trio" scored for violin, viola, and cello, of approximately 13 1/2 minutes in duration, was composed in 1990 - 91. Nine strident block chords open this work, and the viola opens announcing its character to us in a rhapsodic and lamenting "Andante" solo. Fourteen strident chords, and the cello enters with a flighty "Allegretto" solo that has a touch of the plaintive. Three chords. Pause. Then seven chords make way for a highly brilliant and energetic violin solo. The three exchange rolling, on-rushing sixteenth-note triplets in "Vivo" tempo. Descending pizzicati introduce the lamenting character of the first "Adagio" trio which is expanded upon by all the instruments. Again we hear the rolling triplets, interlaced with violent marcato attacks on repeated block chords. The second "Adagio" quickly grows from this, expanded by imitative counterpoint which reaches an incredible emotional tension, the two higher instruments ascending and the cello falling away from them. A single sustained note with a hint of the triplets. A vivace finale sneaks up on us with a jolly Bartókian-like theme which is developed in fugal style. A brief pizzicati and the fugue begins again in ever increasing tempi. The pizzicati episode is developed further. The fugue theme is played in unison and then breaks apart in separate contrapuntal lines with imitative shakes, incredibly fast virtuosic runs and other passages which build to a classic end. — "Blue" *Gene Tyranny*, *AllMusic.com*

James Rolfe (Canada b.1961)**And Then Grace** (2000)

Toronto composer **James Rolfe** has been commissioned and performed by ensembles, orchestras, choirs, theatres, and opera companies in Canada, the USA, Europe, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. His work has been recognized with a Guggenheim Fellowship, the K. M. Hunter Music Award, the Louis Applebaum Composers Award, the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music, SOCAN's Jan V. Matejcek Concert Music Award, a Chalmers Arts Fellowship, and the Outstanding Choral Work Award from the Association of Canadian Choral Communities.

The Queen of Puddings Music Theatre Company production of Mr. Rolfe's opera *Beatrice Chancy* played to sold-out houses and rave reviews in Toronto, Dartmouth, and Edmonton. The company later produced *Inês*, which was nominated for a Dora Award. Three masques (*Orpheus and Eurydice*, *Aeneas and Dido*, and *Europa*) were premiered by The Toronto Masque Theatre to critical and audience acclaim. *Elijah's Kite*, an opera for children, was co-produced in New York by Tapestry Opera and the Manhattan School of Music, and given its Canadian premiere before the Governor-General at Rideau Hall. His opera *Swoon* was premiered by the Canadian Opera Company, which

subsequently commissioned *Crush*, mounted in a workshop production at The Banff Centre in July 2015. Current projects include an operatic version of Gogol's *The Overcoat* with writer Morris Panych, to be produced by Tapestry Opera with Canadian Stage and Vancouver Opera (running March 27 to April 14, 2018 in Toronto, and April 28 to May 12 in Vancouver) and the song cycle *I Think We Are Angels* for Soundstreams (6-7 June 2018).

Like its title, an anagram of Gwendolyn MacEwen's poem "The Grand Dance", *And Then Grace* freely remixes certain elements of her poem. Musical ephemera whirl past. Some come from an imagined vocal rendering of the poem, others from left field—Barry White, the South Park movie, ersatz Stravinsky, numerous plundered snippets of my own pieces—but like so many ghosts, they never settle down or take root. *And Then Grace* was commissioned by The Gallery Players Association with the assistance of the Ontario Arts Council. —

James Rolfe

Arnold Schoenberg (Austria/USA 1874-1951)

String Trio, Op.45 (1946)

Arnold Schoenberg (born Vienna 13 September 1874, died Los Angeles 13 July 1951) was a revolutionary Austrian composer and painter, associated with the expressionist movement in German poetry and art, and the leader of the Second Viennese School of composition. Schoenberg was admired early in his career for simultaneously extending the traditionally opposed German Romantic styles of Brahms and Wagner. Later, his name would come to personify radical innovations in atonality (Schoenberg preferred the term pantonality) that would become the most polemical feature of 20th-century art music. In the 1920s, Schoenberg developed the twelve-tone technique, an influential compositional method of manipulating an ordered series of all twelve notes in the chromatic scale. Following the election of the Nazi Party in 1933 Schoenberg's works were denounced as degenerate Jewish music and he left Berlin for the United States in 1934. Schoenberg was also a painter, an important music theorist, and an influential teacher of composition; his students included Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Hanns Eisler, Egon Wellesz, and later John Cage, Lou Harrison, Earl Kim, Leon Kirchner, and other prominent musicians. Many of Schoenberg's practices, including the formalization of compositional method and his insistence that audiences should listen analytically are echoed in avant-garde musical thought throughout the 20th century.

The String Trio op. 45 was commissioned by the music department of Harvard University for a symposium on Musical Criticism in spring 1947. It was premiered by members of the Walden String Quartet at Harvard (in Cambridge, Massachusetts) on 1 May 1947. Schoenberg had begun work on the piece already in June 1946, but the majority was composed between 20 August - i.e. only two-and-a-half weeks after Schoenberg suffered a severe heart attack - and 23 September. This traumatic episode, which Schoenberg survived only through an injection directly into his heart, took its toll on the 71-year-old composer, and Schoenberg told Thomas Mann (as reported in "Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus") that his Trio reflected his physical and psychological suffering during this period. The single-movement work is divided into five sections: three "parts" and two "episodes." Part three begins like Part one and recapitulates aspects of the whole work. Thematic development is spread throughout the work. The piece ends with a 12-note statement in the violin in which the basic motifs are presented. The variety of surface details (abrupt dynamic contrasts, expressionistic string effects, variations in tone) stand in contrast to the rigorous serialism that undergirds the work's structure.

— *Camille Crittenden, Arnold Schoenberg Center*

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

Best known as the concertmaster of the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra (COC), **Marie Bérard** is also a sought-after chamber musician, soloist, recording artist and teacher. She is a former member of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and has performed with a variety of smaller ensembles such as Amici, Array Music and New Music Concerts. She is also a member of Trio Arkel as well as the ARC Ensemble which has toured in Europe, China and the United States. Highly regarded as an interpreter of contemporary music, Ms. Bérard has released a recording of a concerto by Henry Kucharzyk for violin and brass ensemble on the Opening Day label and can be heard on numerous CBC recordings. Ms. Bérard is a regular performer at chamber music festivals, notably the Domaine Forget International Festival, the Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival, The Blair Atholl Festival in Scotland, and holds the position of Associate Concertmaster of the Mainly Mozart Festival in San Diego. Ms. Bérard joined the faculty of the Glenn Gould School in the fall of 2000 and plays a 1767 Pietro Landolfi violin.

Teng Li is establishing herself as a diverse and dynamic performer internationally. Along with her TSO solo appearances, Ms. Li has performed with the National Chamber Orchestra, the Santa Rosa Symphony, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, the Haddonfield Symphony, Shanghai Opera Orchestra, the Canadian Sinfonietta and Esprit Orchestra. Ms. Li is also an active recitalist and chamber musician participating in the festivals of Marlboro, Santa Fe, Mostly Mozart, Music from Angel Fire, Rome, Moritzburg (Germany) and the Rising Stars Festival in Caramoor. She has performed with the Guarneri Quartet in New York (04/05), at Carnegie Hall (Weill Recital Hall) and with the

92nd St. “Y” Chamber Music Society. Teng was also featured with the Guarneri Quartet in their last season (2009), and was also a member of the prestigious Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society Two Program. Teng is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

Winona Zelenka is one of Canada's finest cellists on the scene today. As a soloist, she has performed concerti with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Mississauga Symphony and the Toronto Philharmonia Orchestra among many others. She is a dedicated recitalist and chamber musician as well as a proponent of new music, having performed several world premieres of works written for her by Canadian composers. In 2006 she formed Trio Arkel with violinist Marie Berard and violist Teng Li which has presented a chamber music series at Trinity St. Paul's Centre in Toronto since 2013. In June of 2010 Winona released her first CD set of the Bach Suites for Solo Cello, a recording on Marquis Classics. Her second recording, released in 2012, is titled “Connections” and is a collaboration with the celebrated pianist Connie Shih. A graduate of Indiana University under the tutelage of Janos Starker, Winona has won orchestral positions in England, Canada and the United States. Her professional career has included two seasons of Acting Principal Cellist of the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra, and five seasons as Acting Principal Cellist of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, of which she has been a member since 2001.

My War Years: Arnold Schoenberg

(A Larry Weinstein Production)

Actors portraying Arnold Schoenberg and his friends and students (including Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Alexander von Zemlinsky, Alma Mahler, Erwin Stein, Roberto Gerhard, Wassily Kandinsky and Hanns Eisler) tell the story of the composer's life in their own words. The film takes us on a journey from the beginning of the 20th century, when Schoenberg composed his last post-Romantic pieces and first atonal works, through to the WWI years, to the discovery of his Twelve-Tone method in the early 1920s. It features excerpts from live performances of Schoenberg's works such as *Verklärte Nacht*, the *Gurre-Lieder*, the Second String Quartet, *Erwartung* and *Pierrot Lunaire*. Featured artists include: Pierre Boulez and the Ensemble Inter-Contemporain, Marianne Pousseur, the Schoenberg Quartet, London Symphony Orchestra, Oliver Knussen and Michael Tilson Thomas. Produced and directed by Larry Weinstein.

47th season | 394th event

Thursday March 22, 2018

The Music Gallery, 197 John Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts and The Music Gallery present:

THE LIONESSE OF IRAN

An Evening of World Premieres
featuring the poetry of Simin Behbahani

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Instruments of Happiness electric guitar quartet: Tim Brady (artistic director)

Jonathan Barriault, Simon Duchesne, Francis Brunet-Turcotte

Marie-Annick Béliveau mezzo-soprano

Introduction @ 7:15 | Concert @ 8:00

Programme:

Kiya Tabassian (Iran/Canada b.1976)

Faryâd * (2018)

poem: *Cry*

Laurie Radford (Canada b.1958)

my cut glass body * (2017)

poem: *Sounds of Blossoms*

Jennifer Butler (Canada b.1976)

The stars have closed their eyes * (2017)

poem: *Wine of Light*

Parisa Sabet (Iran/Canada b.1980)

A Cup of Sin * (2017)

poem: *I Want a Cup of Sin*

Tim Brady (Canada b. 1956)

His Master's Voice (2017)

poem: *His Master's Voice*

Juliet Palmer (New Zealand/Canada b.1967)

Morse ☿ (2017)

poems: *Morse* and extracts from *Bani Adam* by Sa'adi

* Commissioned by Bradyworks / Instruments of Happiness

☿ Commissioned by the Ontario Arts Council

* Commissioned by the Toronto Arts Council

PROGRAMME NOTES BY TIM BRADY

In 2015, while reading a random magazine in a Bank of Montreal waiting room, I discovered Simin Behbahani's character and poetry. Immediately attracted by her history and her works, I quickly conceived a project of musical creation for my group "Instruments of Happiness": to gather six Canadian composers around the works of Ms. Behbahani to create an event which celebrates at the same time the richness and beauty of her work, but also the quality and diversity of Canadian creation.

We begin our journey with **Kiya Tabassian's** "Faryâd". Kiya was born in Tehran in 1976. His family came to Quebec in 1990. After studying in Iran and at the Montreal Conservatory of Music, he became well known as a musician for his work with the Constantinople group. His music cuts through the artistic space between traditional Iranian music and contemporary music. His work for this concert, "Faryâd", is based on the poem "Cry". It is a very rhythmic piece, which exploits ranges and sounds drawn from Persian music, but its structure and its development are very contemporary. The text is sung in Farsi.

FARYÂD – CRY

You, thinking of me, from time to time
Be happy with this, as you bring me happiness

You said to me, "GO", but you did not tell me where
A bird with a broken wing can fly towards.

Do not hide the secret of your sadness in the cloak of silence
Your cry is heard from afar, in each glance

The whirlwind of my tears, what are you saying?
The torment of love, what makes you lament?

Your image stays burned in the deepest layers
of the memory of Simin

You, thinking of me, from time to time.

Laurie Radford is a professor of composition at the University of Calgary, but has also played the electric guitar since he was a teenager. His work "my cut glass body", from the poem "Sounds of Blossoms", emphasizes the sound diversity of the electric guitar, adding a melodic line full of drama and contrast.

SOUNDS OF BLOSSOMS

My heart is more broken than the crystal cup you let drop on the rocks. – Khaghani

Hear the Spring in my body,
Hear the blossoms opening like the Pleiades,
singing, it's me, it's me.
Hear my drunken declaration: a wild rose, that's me.
Why should I wait any longer to play the lyre of Aphrodite?
Hear me plucking its veins in a thousand modes.
Each of my veins is now the string of an instrument:
hear their music rising and descending.
Hear me playing myself, singing, *tantanam, tantananam*.
This soaring, overflowing joy – is it me? No, not me!
Hear once more the old wine sparkling in the wine jar.
Gaze in my eyes at consciousness flourishing like a garden.
Hear a world of awakenings dormant in my words.
Hear the world awakening in my words.
You fill my body and soul like a pearl filling its shell.
Hear your own words, said and unsaid, on my lips.
For I am both the drunken gypsy
and the precious cup in your hand.
Hear your rivals gasp at the waste as I fall.
Hear the shattering sounds, my stonehearted one,
hear the sounds of my falling and liberation,
hear my cut glass body.

Jennifer Butler is a Vancouver-based composer who is deeply involved in her field as a freelance artist. She was President of the Canadian League of Composers from 2011 to 2014. "The stars have closed their eyes" is based on the poem "Wine of Light". It is a work that emphasizes the fragility, the beauty and the sonority of the text, while exploring these same qualities in writing for the musical ensemble. A piece that gently inspires a state of reflection.

THE WINE OF LIGHT

The stars have closed their eyes, come.
The wine of light flows through the veins of the night, come.
I have poured so many tears waiting in the night's lap,
that twilight has blossomed and the morning has bloomed, come.
In my mind's sky your memory etches lines of gold
like a shooting star, come.

I've sat so long with the night telling my tale of woe
that the night and I have turned pale with sorrow, come.
If you are waiting to see me again when I die,
understand, this is the time, come.
If I hear anyone's footsteps, I imagine they are yours,
with all this beating, my heart is bursting out my breast, come.
You didn't come when the sky was full of stars like grapes,
now that dawn has picked them one by one, come.

You're the hope in the heart of Simin-the-broken-hearted,
put an end to my misery, come.

Parisa Sabet is an Iranian-Canadian composer. She is completing a doctorate in music at the University of Toronto. Her composition "A Cup of Sin" is clearly divided into three sections. The first and third sections are drawn from traditional Iranian melodies, but the middle section creates another dramatic contrast, with harmonies and textures inspired by contemporary chamber music which underlines the text's metaphors.

I WANT A CUP OF SIN

He said I want that which cannot be found. – Mowlavi

I want a cup of sin, a cup of corruption,
and some clay mixed with darkness,
from which I shall mold an image shaped like man,
wooden-armed and straw-haired.

His mouth is big.
He has lost all his teeth.
His looks reflect his ugliness within.
Lust has made him violate all prohibitions
and to grow on his brow an organ of shame.
His eyes are like two scarlet beams,
one focused on a sack of gold,
the other on the pleasures found in bed.
He changes masks like a chameleon,
has a two-timing heart like an eel.
He grows tall like a giant branch,
as if his body has acquired vegetable properties.

Then, he will come to me.
intent on my oppression.
I will protest and scream against his horror.
And that ogre called man
will tame me with his insults.

As I gaze into his eyes
innocently and full of shame,
I will scold myself: you see,
how you spent a lifetime wishing for "Adam."
Here you have what you asked for.

My own composition, "His Master's Voice" comes from my fascination with 78 rpm records, the central image of the poem. As always in Ms. Behbahani's poetry, the 78 rpm and the gramophone are a metaphor for human memory.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

This antique lacquered disk,
where is the tool to make it sing?

With the dog and megaphone on its label,
it's a pity if it remains silent.
Tell this dog sitting on its haunches
to bark with all its might:
to awaken, perhaps, from their sweet sleep
the faithful Companions of the Cave.
Their old coins have become our oft-told tales.
The enchantment of our childish hearts
cannot be purchased with current coinage.
The heart of childhood beats
with childish rhythms.
Malign it not by calling it sick.
No doctor knows its secrets.

Speak, ancient record, speak!
Where's that woman, master of the house,
to wipe off the dust from your face
and the sorrow from your heart?
Where is she, to crank the handle with her soft hands
and make the needle of my childhood years
run in the grooves?
Where is she, to let the little girl decked in silk and lace
twirl like a bouquet of flowers,
dancing to your music?

We conclude the concert with "Morse" by Canadian-New Zealand composer **Juliet Palmer**. After a doctoral degree in Princeton (USA), Juliet moved to Toronto, where for the past 25 years she has worked as an Artistic Director of Urbanvessel and as a freelance artist. She has presented several productions across Canada, the United States and elsewhere. "Morse" uses the Morse code (suggested by the poem's title) for these rhythmic resources, allowing the music to explore the natural rhythms of English and Farsi. The text speaks of an "encoded" message and refers to the poem "Bani Adam", an important Persian work of the 13th century.

MORSE

Dash, dot, dot, dot, dash
songbird sings a song full of signs
from the branches of an elm tree.
As the night and the terror spread,
in my desperation to know,
the silences between sounds
convert every song into a message.
Perhaps from the borders of fire and blood,
perhaps from the fields of war and madness
a bird with a tired heart has brought a message
from a man with a tired body.
Her cries are daggers. Blood drips from her sighs.
Sadness chokes her like a noose.
Her moans question why these strife-smitten people
have drenched in blood the carpet of grass
spread by festive Zephyr.

Come, Paradise-lovers, this is Paradise,
with everywhere flowers sprouting
and jasmines in bloom.
You, heavenly heralds, why stoke the fires of hell,
set flame to people's lives and homes?

We are all parts of the same body,
similar in essence, told us that worldly-wise man.
How will he face the mothers and their tears,

that iron-hearted pourer of molten lead
in the dead of night?

O songbird, I have listened to your secrets.
I know something must be done.
but not by someone with her hands tied like me.

Dash, dot, dot, dot, dash – it's a message I misinterpret.
Silence, you won't break with this poem or that song.

I want to thank all the composers for their passion and their involvement in this project. We must also thank the guitarists of "Instruments of Happiness", as well as the magnificent and remarkable singer Marie-Annick Béliveau who transforms musical scores, by the magic of her voice, into performances rich in emotion, beauty and drama.

Instruments of Happiness comes in three formats: the quartet; the orchestra of 20 professional guitarists and a group that brings together 100 professional and community guitarists. Instruments of Happiness is obviously obsessed with the electric guitar. We seek to go beyond the guitar – to make concerts, creations, projects that are first and foremost fascinating, intriguing and exciting musical events, all prepared and presented with a great concern for quality of sound and performance. We also dare to dream of making you happy with our instruments.

Marie-Annick Béliveau has been present on Montreal's stages for more than 20 years. She recently received the Opus Award for "Music Event of the Year" for her presentation of Scelsi's *Capricorn Songs*, a performance-based opera for solo voice. She has premiered more than thirty works, and can be heard regularly in Europe and Canada, on the CBC and on several award-winning recordings. "Her rich voice and nuanced expressive palette make her an ideal interpreter, subtle, moving with disconcerting ease from pure playfulness to unsettling vulnerability." – *Lucie Renaud*

Simin Behbahani, born Siminbar Khalili, also called Simin Khalatbari (20 July 1927, Tehran – 19 August 2014, Tehran) was an Iranian poet who earned the nickname "Lioness of Iran" because she eloquently defied authorities in her country and opposed oppression and violence in more than 600 poems. Prolific all her life, she published her first collection, *Setar-e shekasteh* (The Broken Sitar), in 1951. She renewed the classical forms of Persian poetry by exploring modern themes, often through the use of a female narrator rather than a male narrator, reversing the traditional *ghazal* structure. She conducted these experiments at a time when free verse was gaining popularity among Iranian poets to the detriment of traditional classical forms. From 1962, she also wrote lyrics for Iranian state radio. Following the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the coming to power of an Islamic regime, she used her pen to condemn human rights violations, which constantly exposed her to censorship and incarceration. She was twice nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature. The English translations of Simin Behbahani's poems come from *A Cup of Sin*, Farzaneh Milani and Kaveh Safa (Syracuse, 1999). Their use has been authorized.

47th season | 395th event
Sunday May 27, 2018
Mazzoleni Hall, Royal Conservatory of Music
5:15^{pm} Introduction | 6:00^{pm} Concert
New Music Concerts presents

Zipangu!

Programme:

Brian Harman (Canada b.1981)

to dash against darkness (2018) ◆ ●

Commissioned with the assistance of the Ontario Arts Council

Stephen Sitarski, Corey Gemmell, Mark Lee, Lynn Kuo, Aysel Taghi-Zada violins Doug Perry, Rory McLeod, Diane Leung, Sheila Jaffe, Yolanda Bruno violas David Hetherington, Amahl Arulananda cellos
Adam Scime contrabass Rick Sacks, Ryan Scott percussion Robert Aitken direction

Roger Reynolds (USA b.1934)

not forgotten (2007-2010) ◆

Giverny – Iannis – Toru – Ryoanji – Elliott – Now

Accordes (generously supported by Roger D. Moore):

Erika Raum, Marie Bérard violins Doug Perry viola David Hetherington cello

—Intermission—

Roger Reynolds

'O'o (2018) ◆ ●

Robert Aitken flute IRIS Ensemble: Yolanda Bruno, Mark Lee violins Rory McLeod viola Leana Rutt cello

Claude Vivier (Canada 1948-1983)

Zipangu (1980) ◆

Commissioned with the assistance of the Ontario Arts Council

Stephen Sitarski, Corey Gemmell, Yolanda Bruno, Mark Lee, Sheila Jaffe, Lynn Kuo, Aysel Taghi-Zada violins Doug Perry, Rory McLeod, Diane Leung violas David Hetherington, Amahl Arulanandam cellos
Adam Scime contrabass Robert Aitken direction

● World Premiere ◆ Canadian Premiere ◆ NMC Commission

Brian Harman's compositions are frequently inspired by extra-musical ideas such as technology, architecture, dance, and concepts of ritual. In 2016 he was the recipient of the KM Hunter Artist Award for Music. His compositions *Hum* (for double sextet), *Sewing the Earthworm* (for voice and piano), *Cherry Beach* (for violin and piano) and *Inverno* (for solo piano) have recently been commercially released on the Redshift and Centredisc labels. He has collaborated extensively with artists in other disciplines, including performance artist Nina Arsenault, writer David Brock, dancer Jennifer Nichols and visual artist Danilo Ursini. Brian received his Doctor of Music from McGill University in 2012, and served as Ontario Councillor and President of the Canadian League of Composers from 2013 to 2016.

Brian Harman (Canada b.1981)

to dash against darkness (2018) ◆ ●

For this commission, I was asked to write a piece inspired by Claude Vivier's *Zipangu* – one of my favourite pieces of music. Vivier's work has been influential on my music in so many ways – from small technical ideas to overarching themes and extra musical ideas. Like Vivier, I often employ melodies as central components of a composition that guide other compositional decisions. We also share an interest in ritualistic and ceremonial aspects of music. I thought a lot about Vivier, his music and his life while writing the piece, but did not attempt to make explicit connections between my new work and *Zipangu*.

to dash against darkness is in two movements. It uses more violas and cellos than violins, allowing me to explore the depths

of this rich ensemble. I'm interested in distorting musical materials by submerging them into the lower register, as if plunging them underwater, rendering them murky and less clear. This is quite different from much of my music, which tends to reside mostly above middle C.

I always find it strange, and difficult, to give a title to a piece of music. *to dash against darkness* is a line from an e. e. cummings poem, entitled *i will wade out*, that reflects what I was thinking about while writing the piece. — *Brian Harman*

Roger Reynolds: composer, writer, producer and mentor, pioneer in sound spatialization, intermedia and also algorithmic concepts, an inveterate synthesizer of diverse capacities and perspectives. His notorious (1961) composition, *The Emperor of Ice Cream*, which uses graphic notation to depict performer location on a stage, was widely imitated. In it, eight singers and a jazz trio gloss, while musically manifesting, a Wallace Stevens poem. In fact, Reynolds's work often arises out of text. One of his IRCAM commissions, *Odyssey*, (1989-93) sets a bilingual Beckett text; his Pulitzer prize-winning composition, *Whispers Out of Time*, for string orchestra, muses over a poem by John Ashbery. The FLIGHT project arose out of a collection of texts that stretches from Plato to astronaut Michael Collins. This body of work demonstrates how seamlessly text, electroacoustic resources, and novel presentation strategies can be melded with live instrumental and vocal performance.

Projects with individual performers and ensembles, theater directors, choreographers, and scientists have provoked challenging inter-personal collaborations, including *Sanctuary* (2003-2007) for percussion quartet and real-time computer processing with Steven Schick. About it, *Gramophone* writes: "Reynolds goes right inside sound. ... Here's the most outstandingly original view of percussion since Varèse's *Ionisation*." A recent cycle of duos for solo instrumentalist and real-time computer musician includes *MARKed MUSIC* (with contrabassist Mark Dresser), and *Shifting/Drifting* (with violinist Irvine Arditti). About a Mode 2-disc set of Reynolds's complete cello music featuring Alexis Descharmes, *Gramophone* wrote: "fresh-minted but also thrillingly open-ended ..." In addition to continuing musical composition, Reynolds' current projects include an innovative collection of texts and images, *PASSAGE*, and a collaborative book exploring Xenakis' creative ways as exemplified in a Desert House he designed for Karen and Roger Reynolds.

Reynolds' music is published exclusively by C.F. Peters Corporation, and his manuscripts are housed in a Special Collection at the Library of Congress, as well as at the Sacher Foundation in Basel. He has been commissioned by the Philadelphia, San Francisco, Los Angeles, BBC, and National symphonies and the Japan Philharmonic, and also by the British Arts Council, the French Ministry of Culture, IRCAM, the Fromm, Rockefeller, Suntory, and Koussevitzky foundations. Reynolds's students occupy leading positions at Harvard (Czernowin), SUNY Buffalo (Felder), University of Michigan (Daugherty), University of Florida (Koonce), and North Texas (May).

Reynolds envisions his own path as entailing the principled weaving together of threads from tradition with novel provocations originating outside music. The elements (wind, fire, water) have spoken in his works beginning with the vocal storm in *VOICESPACE I: "Still"* (1975), and continuing in *Versions/Stages* and *The Red Act Arias*. Mythic themes are also frequently drawn upon. Reading about and research in psychoacoustics have affected his outlook. Research in the Sacher Foundation's Collections resulted in publications about Varèse's conceptualization of "space": *The Last Word is Imagination: Parts I and II*. His long friendships with Cage, Nancarrow, Takemitsu and Xenakis also inform his outlook in procedural and personal ways. Reynolds conceives of composition as "a process of illumination", a path toward (occasional) clarity in turbulent times. He seeks the satisfaction of proposing and experiencing unexpected connections, of bringing the elevating capacity of music into public spaces, of engaging with other arts and artists to discover new amalgamations of sensation and insight that can "improve the human experience."

Roger Reynolds (USA b.1934)

not forgotten (2007-2010) ◆

not forgotten is an assemblage of individuals, music, and places that came into my mind and have not left. As memories often enter as barely noticed traces, flowering engrossingly, then displaced, replaced by others, four of the six movements of this work are introduced by solos that gradually evolve into movements for the full quartet. *Giverny* always begins a performance. The culminating *Now*, always ends it. It is my intention that the other four movements (*Elliott*, *Toru*, *Ryoanji*, and *Iannis*) will occur in differing order at each performance, lending a touch of the unexpected even when the content of the materials themselves is fully mastered. Why should music not be, as life is, not entirely predictable?

Performance notes: *Giverny* This is a malleable chorale, responding to a memorable sketch Monet used to suggest his aims for one of the miraculous water lily paintings. The harmonic content is formed from a succession of superimposed dyads. There is a wrinkle, however. The left hand is set so as to produce a particular interval in a particular register, and that fixed "hand set" wanders higher or lower on the same strings, so that the heard interval continuously changes, shrinking as the hand moves towards the bridge, and widening as the hand moves up the fingerboard. The performer fixes the hand so as to produce the required interval, and then uses this unchanging hand set, guided by the curving glissando indications. The "target interval" for each phrase sounds normally at a central moment in each phrase-gesture, but its effects wanders variably before and after this moment of stability. There are occasional trilled chords – more stable and unanimous – that bloom

briefly on the surface of the overall, aquatic surface.

Now is an aggregated solo, involving all four players, often in unison. It surveys the materials out of which the remaining movements are made, but in a constant temporal flux. There are occasional bifurcations, when duos (the violins in contrast to the two lower instruments) separate. There are also four still centers, when similar motives are languidly overlaid for a long while, as though unable to return to the clarity and decisiveness of the present moment.

Iannis is built around a moment in Xenakis' elemental *Tetras*. A memorable moment in Huddersfield in the early '80s introduced me both to the Arditti Quartet and to what was then Xenakis' entire output of chamber music for strings. Alternating between tremulous unanimity and assertive independence, my music converges upon and then emerges out of his specifics. Another element – The Aegean – frames this movement, recalling the periodic variabilities of one's experience with the glittering wave patterning of the waters that surround Greece.

Ryoanji This movement responds to the raked sand and surrounded rocks of the fifteenth century Zen garden in Kyoto. It is almost devoid of pitch. Utilizing a repertoire of nine noise sources, temporal patterns, echoing repetitions, and occasional moments of more forceful cohesiveness, it evokes a parched landscape of sounds with only the faintest touch of the lyric.

Toru Takemitsu was almost as enamored of film as he was of sounds and their music. His scores include one for Teshigahara's haunting *Woman in the Dunes*. Takemitsu converted this music into a chamber work for strings, *Dorian Horizon*. A central, expressive quote from this piece forms a core to my Toru movement, towards which, again, my music converges and then departs. There are some startling interruptions in the form of auditory wasabi.

Elliott This movement was adapted from a short string quartet written on commission from the Cité de la musique as a tribute to Elliott Carter. His riotous Third String Quartet includes a passage during which the cello rises in a powerfully expressive challenge to successions of acerbic, block-like chords. I have followed a similar process again here, arriving at and departing from the (almost) literal essence of the seminal Carter passage. — *Roger Reynolds*

Roger Reynolds

'O'o (2018) ◆ ●

In the Summer of 2017 Bob Aitken and I were on Nova Scotia, talking about repertoire. He expressed the wish that there were more music for flute and string quartet. I realized, immediately, that the prospect of such a quintet was appealing – entailing a “repositioning” of the string quartet medium that I have found so continuously engaging so as to include another, distinctive, treble voice. We quickly came to agreement that I would compose something for him, and, in the following weeks I “opened myself” as I do when considering a new project, so that breezes familiar and remote could come in and seed my mental space.

The perils of climate change, and of the related loss of one after another evolutionary line of fellow creatures, are clear. I happened upon a poignant tale of the last remaining pair of 'O'o birds that had retreated to the Alaka'i swamp on the Hawaiian Island of Kaua'i as their former environment degraded. Both male and female of this species sang. It seems that the male of the last pair lived for four years after his mate ceased responding. My plan was to fashion a sonic environment within which, the outlines of a calling and responding would gradually emerge. In the resulting quintet, different instrumental pairings try out responsive interaction and finally settle on the flute as caller and the cello (all high-register harmonics) as respondent.

I am less interested in the melodrama of a haunting narrative of loss and constancy, than by the ways in which varied musical behaviours evolve successively, as a “coming to awareness” of the need to call out: fields of pizzicato points, the gradual occurrence of sustained tones, stable threads weaving into cloud-like strata, intermittent warbles urging the strata into harmonic blocks, and the blocks then stretching and fragmenting so as to provide a ground against which the calls and responses increasingly occupy a listener's attention.

'O'o is dedicated to Robert Aitken, and was commissioned by New Music Concerts and the Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance, with the financial assistance of The Koerner Foundation; The Merryweather Fund; Austin and Beverly Clarkson; Camille Watts; Véronique Lacroix and Paul Taub. — *Roger Reynolds*

Born April 14th 1948 in Montréal, **Claude Vivier** studied composition with Gilles Tremblay and piano with Irving Heller at the Conservatory there. He subsequently went to Europe to study composition with Karlheinz Stockhausen and electronic music with Gottfried Michael Koenig and Hans Ulrich Humpert. He obtained several grants from the Canada Council and was named “Composer of the Year” by the Canadian Music Council in 1981. The two years of study with Stockhausen revealed a musical personality with a strong predilection for monody and for writing for the voice (solo and choral), but it also began to show the importance Vivier was

to place on texts and unveiled a style of writing that was to stray progressively farther from the usual contemporary music trends to become more and more personal and transparent. In 1977 Claude Vivier undertook a long journey to Asia and the Middle East. This trip had a significant influence on his writing. The great variety of musical influences he received had the effect, paradoxically, of purifying his own musical expression. Melody gradually occupies a foremost position in his works and his concept of music as being an integral part of daily life is confirmed. Following a few years of teaching in Montreal, Claude Vivier devoted his time entirely to composition. He was writing a piece prophetically titled "Do you believe in the immortality of the soul" when he died in Paris the 7th of March 1983. He left some forty works characterized by one of the most personal and expressive styles in the evolution of Canadian music.

Claude Vivier (Canada 1948-1983)

Zipangu (1980) ❖

Commissioned by New Music Concerts, *Zipangu* was written in 1980 and first performed in Toronto under the direction of Robert Aitken. The piece is written for two groups of strings: on the one hand, six violins and on the other, one violin, three violas, two cellos and one double bass. Claude Vivier writes: "Zipangu was the name given to Japan during the time of Marco Polo. Building around a melody, I explore different aspects of 'colour' in this piece. I have tried to veil my harmonic structures by using different bow techniques. A colourful sound is obtained by applying exaggerated bow pressure on the strings as opposed to pure harmonics when returning to normal technique. In this way melody becomes 'colour' (chords), grows lighter and slowly returns as though purified and solitary." The melody the composer is speaking of is always present in this work. It is clearly expressed both at the beginning and the end of the work, but undergoes all sorts of transformations throughout the rest of the piece. In one of the most beautiful passages we hear a solo violin playing a very fanciful air against a texture made up entirely of harmonics and in which we recognize the basic harmony and its harmonization. It is a work which towards its end achieves a deeply moving lyricism in a grave and sombre passage. — *Serge Garant*

World renowned Canadian flutist, composer and conductor **Robert Aitken** has been honoured with the Order of Canada and is a Chevalier de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres (France). In 1970, having previously served as principal flute for both the Vancouver and Toronto Symphony Orchestras, Aitken embarked on a solo career that has taken him to virtually every corner of the globe. He has more than 70 recordings to his credit and such notables as John Cage, George Crumb, Elliott Carter, Toru Takemitsu, Gilles Tremblay, John Beckwith and Bruce Mather have dedicated works to him. In 2003 he was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Flute Association (USA). In 2004, he retired as Professor für Flöte at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany, a position he had held for 16 years. In 2009 Aitken was the recipient Canada's largest arts award, the prestigious Walter Carse Prize for Excellence in the Performing Arts. As a composer, he holds Bachelor and Masters degrees from the University of Toronto and all of his works are published by Universal Edition, Salabert, Ricordi and Peer Music. Robert Aitken was director of the Banff Centre Winter Program in Music, founder and artistic director of Music Today, Music at Shawnigan and co-founder, with Norma Beecroft, of New Music Concerts which he has directed since its inception in 1971.

Accordes evolved out of a string quintet that was formed in 1975 to perform John Beckwith's *Musical Chairs*, a commission from the Toronto Symphony Women's Committee. Frequently heard on CBC radio, they have performed on the Roy Thomson Hall Chamber Music Series and constitute the core string players of the New Music Concerts series. This concentration on contemporary music has allowed Accordes to give Canadian, and sometimes world, premieres of works by such composers as Elliott Carter, Ben Johnston, Peter Paul Kropowski, Brian Cherney, Peter Michael Hamel, Michael Tippett, Henri Dutilleux, György Kurtág, Jörg Widmann, Ann Southam and Hope Lee. They have recorded extensively for the Canadian Music Centre label Centrediscs, including discs devoted to the music of Harry Freedman (*Spirit Song*), Harry Somers (*Somers String Quartets*, nominated for a JUNO award in 2001) and Alexina Louie (*Dénouement*). Their recording of NMC co-founder Norma Beecroft's *Amplified String Quartet with Tape* was nominated for a JUNO in 2004. Internationally, Accordes travelled to Cologne with Robert Aitken in 2004 to perform a program of Lithuanian music including works by Balakauskas, Kutavicius and *The Oriental Elegy* by Raminta Šerkšnytė, a NMC commission. More recently in 2013, under the auspices of Soundstreams, they travelled to Taiwan to perform Tan Dun's *Ghost Opera* and to Beijing for the Beijing Modern Music Festival.

The Iris Ensemble is a trans-Canadian chamber music collective made up of a spirited, adventurous, and committed group of musicians who are each carving out exciting careers in their home communities. Originally formed as the ensemble in residence at The Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance (LAMP), The Iris Ensemble has worked with both young and established contemporary composers, premiering new works and unveiling hidden gems of the earlier Canadian repertoire. After a thrilling first summer of music-making, in 2018 they will premiere newly commissioned works with Robert Aitken and New Music Concerts at the 21C Festival in Toronto in May. In June, they continue their tour of concerts, playing an intimate Pocket Concert on June 3rd, at Pontiac Enchanté (Ottawa), and returning to LAMP for the two weeks of workshops and performances with young Canadian composers. For information and tickets to their Pocket Concert performance in Toronto on June 3, visit pocketconcerts.ca.