

new music concerts

*presents*

# György Ligeti at 76



*Featuring the Canadian Première  
of his famed violin concerto and a  
recent work by his former student,  
Denys Bouliane*

**Sunday June 13, 1999  
Glenn Gould Studio**

**7:00 p.m. film—8:00 p.m. concert**

tickets: student/senior \$10, adult \$20

☎ (416) 205-5555

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## György Ligeti at 76

### Programme

***György Ligeti***

a film by Michel Folin

France

***Études pour piano*** (1985-98)

(from Books I & II)

**György Ligeti**

Hungary

***Du Fouet et du Plaisir*** (196-97)

for 15 instruments

**Denys Bouliane**

Canada

***Concerto for Violin  
and Orchestra*** (1992)

for solo violin & 21 instruments

**György Ligeti**

Hungary

**Fujiko Imajishi**, violin

**Christina Petrowska**, piano

**Denys Bouliane**, guest conductor

**Robert Aitken**, conductor

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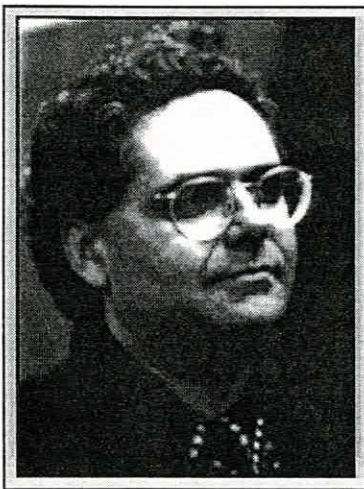
**G**örgy Ligeti was born to Hungarian Jewish parents in 1923 in the Transylvanian town of Tirnaveni. He began his music studies with Farkas at the Kolozsvár Conservatory of Music in 1941 and studied privately in Budapest with Kadosa in the summers of 1942 and 43. Following the end of the Second World War he settled in Budapest, graduating from the Academy of Music in 1949. He was appointed to the music faculty of the Budapest Academy in 1950.

Like most of his colleagues behind the so-called Iron Curtain that fell in 1947, Ligeti's prospects as a composer were limited to what might be expected to meet the standards of Soviet cultural policy. Consequently one finds among his earliest works quite a few folk-song arrangements.

All this was to change when Ligeti escaped to Vienna amidst the chaos of the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian pro-democracy movement in 1956. He was invited to lecture at Darmstadt that summer, establishing a close association with that city's new music seminars that continued until 1972. In 1957-8 he worked alongside Stockhausen in the electronic music studio in Cologne.

Ligeti first came to international attention following the premiere of his *Apparitions* for orchestra during the annual festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music at Cologne in 1960. In contrast to the highly structured, pointillistic music to be heard elsewhere in the festival, Ligeti's work presented a new concept of shifting masses of densely detailed "clouds" of orchestral sound. The distinct textures of serial music were further eroded by his subsequent orchestral work, *Atmospheres* (1961). Here the density of the orchestration becomes so great that the perception of distinct pitches and rhythms is completely annihilated.

Perhaps the most notorious example of Ligeti's interest in shifting densities of sound is his *Poème Symphonique* (1962), which is scored for an orchestra of 100 metronomes. Ove Nordwall has observed how this work "proved fruitful in a later stylistic development: the superposition of different metres to produce sound of perpetual change in rhythm and colour, related to a scheme of interval changes. This was the formal principle in *Continuum* (1968) for harpsichord, in the second organ study, *Coulée* (1969), and also in several movements from larger works. The obsession with time-counting is evident in *Clocks and Clouds* (1972-73), where metronome sounds are gradually transformed into misty images." Like his Darmstadt colleagues, Boulez and Stockhausen, Ligeti helped formulate the sound of post-war contemporary European music.



**D**enys Bouliane was born in the small Quebec town of Grand-Mère in 1955. Though he had played rock guitar in an amateur band while a student at the Petit Séminaire de Québec in his teens, his first formal music lessons took place at the École de Musique de l'Université Laval in 1972. He followed courses in piano and violin there with the completion of a Masters degree in composition in 1979.

In 1980 he moved to Cologne to undertake five years of studies with Ligeti at the Hamburg Conservatory. Bouliane continues to maintain a home in Cologne, though he spends much of the year teaching composition at the Faculty of Music at McGill University in Montreal. Bouliane discussed his trans-Atlantic existence in a recent interview with Dominique Olivier: "In the Germanic world the topic of music often leads to moral discussions. For Germans, music has a meaning, in fact it has too much meaning. Here, it's exactly the other way around... What I get from the Germans is intellectual stimulation, and the overdose of meaning they attach to music nourishes me."

Bouliane is fond of describing his music as an extension of "Magic Realism," a literary form practiced by the Latin-American authors Alejo Carpentier, Jorge Luis Borges and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Bouliane's own musical distortion of reality is accomplished by the use of musical "filters" or "mirrors": "I take cultural clichés, preferably threadbare, just the way they are, but I don't actually use them. Instead, I try to use formulas that refer to these clichés, which may come from jazz, pop music, hard rock, the European classical tradition—anything that makes up the musical milieu around me. Then I pass them through my grinder, my music machine, and help them take on another dimension."