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present

JACK Quartet

Thursday, January 14, 2016 at 8 p.m.

Sponsor: Roger D. Moore

44th Season 2015/2016

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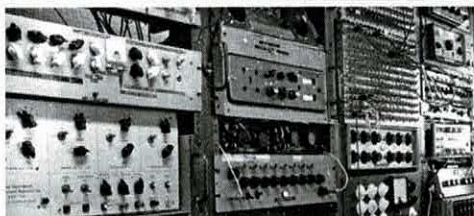
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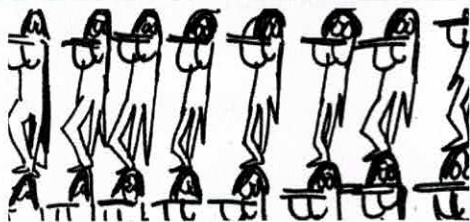
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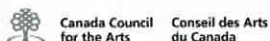
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Programme

Thursday, January 14, 2016 at 8 p.m.

JACK Quartet

Christopher Otto *Violin*

Ari Streisfeld *Violin*

John Pickford Richards *Viola*

Kevin McFarland *Cello*

John Luther Adams
(b. 1953)

The Wind in High Places (2011)
Above Sunset Pass
Maclaren Summit
Looking Toward Hope

John Zorn
(b. 1953)

The Remedy of Fortune (2015)

— Intermission —

Rodericus
(fl. late 14th century),
arr. Christopher Otto

Anglorum psalat

Iannis Xenakis
(1922-2001)

Tetras (1983)

A bear, teddy or otherwise, on this page makes you the lucky winner of a CD!

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JACK Quartet

Christopher Otto *Violin*

Ari Streisfeld *Violin*

John Pickford Richards *Viola*

Kevin McFarland *Cello*



The recipient of
Lincoln Center's
Martin E. Segal Award,
New Music USA's
Trailblazer Award,
and the CMA/ASCAP
Award for Adventurous
Programming, JACK
has performed to
critical acclaim at
Carnegie Hall (USA),
Lincoln Center (USA),

Wigmore Hall (United Kingdom),
Suntory Hall (Japan), Salle Pleyel
(France), Muziekgebouw aan
't IJ (Netherlands), La Biennale
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Donaueschinger Musiktage
(Germany), and the Wittener
Tage für neue Kammermusik
(Germany).

In August they were at
Chamberfest in Ottawa for
a busy week, and made side
trips to Salzburg (Austria) and
Cernier (Switzerland). Last fall
they were mostly in the United

States, with side trips to Bogota
(Columbia), Madrid (Spain) and
Frankfurt (Germany).

Think of the frequent flyer
miles that cello is collecting.

Comprising violinists
Christopher Otto and Ari
Streisfeld, violist John Pickford
Richards and cellist Kevin
McFarland, JACK is focussed
on the commissioning and
performance of new works,
leading them to work closely with
composers John Luther Adams,
Derek Bermel, Chaya Czernowin,
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Reich, Roger Reynolds, Wolfgang Rihm, Salvatore Sciarrino, and John Zorn. Upcoming and recent premieres include works by Wolfgang von Schweinitz, Toby Twining, Georg Friedrich Haas, Simon Holt, Kevin Ernste, and Simon Bainbridge.

JACK operates as a nonprofit organization dedicated to the performance, commissioning, and spread of new string quartet music. The quartet has led workshops with young performers and composers at Princeton University, Yale University, Harvard University, New York University, Columbia University, the Eastman School of Music, Oberlin Conservatory, Manhattan School of Music,

June in Buffalo, New Music on the Point, and at the Darmstadt Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik.

In addition to all that, JACK has issued at least 17 recordings.

The members of the quartet met while attending the Eastman School of Music and studied closely with the Arditti, Kronos, and Muir String Quartets, and with members of the Ensemble Intercontemporain.

JACK Quartet appears by arrangement with Colbert Artists, New York
colbertartists.com
jackquartet.com

Programme Notes

John Luther Adams (b. 1953)

The Wind in High Places (2011)

For four decades, until recently, Mississippi-born, New York-raised John Luther Adams lived and worked within earshot of the Alaskan Pacific Ocean. “My music has always been profoundly influenced by the natural world and a strong sense of place. Through sustained listening to the subtle resonances of the northern soundscape, I

hope to explore the territory of sonic geography — that region between place and culture... between environment and imagination.” His symphonic work *Become Ocean* won the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for music and a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Classical Composition. A death metal website, *steelforbrains.com*, praised it as “doom as all hell.”

The Wind in High Places grew out of three pieces

for solo violin written in 2007 as a memorial to the musician and environmentalist Adams describes below. Its opening movement portrays the distant horizon of a wide, open Alaskan landscape, somewhat like a contemporary northern counterpart to the distinctive archetypal sound world of Aaron Copland’s landscapes. Technically, the second movement is a tempo canon, with staggered entrances of the same musical material played at different speeds. The intensity of this visceral music rises and falls in a broad arc. In the third movement, Adams uses the sonorous resonance of open strings for a scene titled *Looking Toward Hope*. The scene is also, arguably, a metaphor from the environmentalist-composer. The vast passacaglia of sound, anchored by the lowest open strings, seems to express what *could be or might have been* in the beautiful, natural landscape.

John Luther Adams writes: “Gordon Wright was the friend of a lifetime. For 30 years, Gordon and I shared our two greatest passions: music and Alaska. Gordon was my musical collaborator, my next-door neighbour, my fellow environmentalist and my camping buddy. *The Wind in*

High Places is a triptych evoking special moments and places in our friendship. Over the years, I’ve utilized string quartet in several large ensemble works. But, at the age of 59, I finally composed my first string quartet. I’ve long been enamoured with the ethereal tones of Aeolian harps — instruments that draw their music directly from the wind. *The Wind in High Places* treats the string quartet as a large, 16-stringed harp. All the sounds in the piece are produced as natural harmonics or on open strings. Over the course of almost 20 minutes, the fingers of the musicians never touch the fingerboards of the instruments. If I could’ve found a way to make this music without them touching the instruments at all, I would have.”

John Zorn (b. 1953)

The Remedy of Fortune (2015)

Adams and Zorn were both born in 1953. “I used to look at composing music as problem solving,” New York composer John Zorn said in a 60th birthday interview. “As I get older, it’s not about problem solving anymore. There are no solutions, because there are no problems. You just turn the tap and it flows out.” A key figure

on New York's Lower East Side Downtown scene for nearly four decades, Zorn's prolific musical catalogue crosses just about every musical boundary imaginable. His work as composer, improviser, saxophonist, music producer, record label owner (Tzadik) and performance space owner (The Stone) helps his own compositions and those of creative musicians who share his all-embracing philosophy find an audience. His creative work also draws from sources beyond music, including visual art, literature, theatre, film, philosophy, alchemy and mysticism. "The job of a

composer is putting something down on a piece of paper that will inspire the person who's playing," he says.

John Zorn writes: "*The Remedy of Fortune* is divided into six tableaux depicting the changing fortunes of romantic love: pain, desire, devotion, hope, beauty, longing, ecstasy, intoxication, frustration, anger, despair and more. Referencing both Bartók and Machaut, it explores a variety of different sound worlds and is a mature, subtle work, more economical and less flamboyant than *The Alchemist* or *Necronomicon*, but with just as wide an emotional

range. *Remedy* is my sixth quartet and, like Bartók's sixth, each of the six movements (tableaux) begins with a kind of *mesto* which then morphs into a kaleidoscope of contrary emotions, moods, tone colours and tempi. Named for Machaut's 14th century poem (4,300 lines about courtly love), the piece was written in January 2015 and premiered at the mediaeval wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters by the JACK Quartet."

**Rodericus
(fl. late 14th century),
arr. Christopher Otto**

Angelorum psalat

The French composer we know simply as Rodericus (or, backwards, S. Uciredor) is believed to have written the Latin ballade *Angelorum psalat* in the 1390s. "*Angelorum psalat tripudium musicorum pandens armoniam...*" (Let the rejoicing of the angels give praise in song, diffusing the consonance of the musicians).

Christopher Otto writes: "*Angelorum Psalat* is a strikingly original two-part Latin ballade from the Chantilly Codex, a collection of music from the *Ars Subtilior* style. It is the only surviving work of Rodericus, known in the codex as S. Uciredor. Many works of the *Ars Subtilior* (more subtle art)

experiment with rhythmic and notational complexity, and *Angelorum Psalat* is one of the most extreme examples, using no fewer than 20 different vari-coloured note shapes. For my arrangement I have relied on the transcription of Nors S. Josephson, in whose interpretation the note shapes signify a radical expansion of rhythmic possibility, specifying a much richer variety of speeds and durations than most Western music before the 20th century. I have given the first violin and viola the original two parts, and added the second violin and cello parts to clarify the underlying grid of these complex rhythms."

**Iannis Xenakis
(1922-2001)**

Tetras (1983)

"Be Greek, be a mathematician, be an architect, and out of it all make music!" The advice came from French composer Olivier Messiaen to Iannis Xenakis, then a young trained engineer and architect working in Le Corbusier's architectural studio. Wounded in action as a member of the communist resistance, Xenakis fled his homeland with a death sentence from the post-war Greek government in effect until 1974. He worked with the

famous French architect from 1947-59, all the while developing his own methods of musical composition, initially based on mathematical models of disorder. *ST/4*, his earliest string quartet, derived from an orchestral piece *ST/10*, itself derived via an algorithm of his own creation, realised on one of the few (maybe the only) computers that France had to offer in 1962, at the headquarters of IBM-France in Paris. Over 20 years later *Tetras*, his second quartet, is not only the longest of his four string quartets, but the most thought-provoking. *Tetras* (an ancient Greek word for four) employs the quartet, for the most part, as a single vast instrument, rather than four individual instrumentalists. The ground-breaking work is divided into nine sections, each of which explores a specific sound from an exuberant catalogue of sounds. Many of them are seemingly elemental and uninhibited, like the zigzag glissandi that open the work. Others are more delicately drawn and precise. Stochastic processes, drawn from probability theory, work together to achieve structured climaxes. The music, including the recurring glissandi, builds to a dramatic structure that invites repeated listening. "In contrast to many experimental scores,

nothing goes on an instant too long," wrote critic Alex Ross in *The New Yorker*. "*Tetras* is a late-twentieth-century masterpiece, worthy of comparison to the quartets of Berg, Ives, Bartók, and Shostakovich."

From the performer's perspective, cellist Kevin McFarland writes: "A nagging voice tells me I could be producing the same sonic result if my technique were more focused and my energies more direct, in other words if my body was much more relaxed and everything was functioning like a well-oiled machine. However, in a handful of performances where I have attempted to do this, the result was somehow deeply unsatisfying. To give a successful performance of *Tetras* I have become convinced that I must give literally everything I have, so that after the intensely loud and explosive tremolo glissandi towards the end of the piece, when the dynamic drops drastically and the tempo asymptotically approaches complete stillness, the energy dissipates in a way that is not entirely controlled but somehow dissolves into space."

Programme Notes
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Music TORONTO and You

As a not-for-profit Canadian organization, *Music TORONTO* depends on the support of patrons and donors. You support *Music TORONTO* directly through your subscription, package or ticket purchase, and through your generous donations. Ticket sales account for 23% of our revenue. Individual Donations account for 12%.

Your tax dollars support *Music TORONTO* through grants from 3 levels of government: The Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council and the Department of Canadian Heritage. Last year, these grants accounted for 47% of our total operating revenue. They are obviously vital to our existence.

Many of you also contributed to our Endowment Fund, under the Ontario Arts Foundation through a programme of the Government of Ontario. We raised the maximum we were allowed to raise in each phase of the programme. Our fund had a market value of \$182,602 at our year end June 30, 2015. The fund also paid us interest of \$7,643.

We still need your help and your support. You can make a donation at the *Music TORONTO* table in the lobby – or pick up a donation card and a return envelope to mail in.

Thank you to all our donors; your support is important to us – and much appreciated.

What is Scaramouche?

Each year on a Sunday evening in spring, *Music TORONTO* puts on a dinner and silent auction as a fundraiser. It takes place at Scaramouche Restaurant, the legendary French cuisine restaurant at One Benvenuto Place. May 15, 2016 will be the 27th year of this extraordinary event.

Master chef Keith Froggett prepares a special multi-course menu. Cave Spring Cellars donates matching wines. Co-owners Carl Korte and Chef Keith do the evening at cost; all the restaurant staff for the evening are volunteers. We enjoy some of the city's most exquisite food.

The event also includes a silent auction, 50 or so items of varied value, from cook books to clothing, works of art, funky items... It's a special event and always a lovely evening.

Make sure Jennifer has your name and contact info, and we'll send you the details for Scaramouche 2016 early in the new year. Then, put on your party clothes, bring an appetite, and enjoy a great meal and a good time. Part of your ticket price is receipted as a donation, so you'll also have the added satisfaction of helping us balance our budget.

For details about Scaramouche last year, May 2015, please see page 20.

Endowment Fund

Music TORONTO established its Endowment Fund in November 1998, under the Arts Endowment Fund Program of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, administered by the Ontario Arts Foundation. *Music* TORONTO was allowed to keep these donations for operations; the matching dollars from the Ontario government were deposited in the fund. The numbers in brackets beside donor names indicate multiple donations during the years that the matching dollar programme operated. This list also includes the people who responded to our 30 for our 30th Campaign to raise funds for our 30th season (2001-02), and donors to Phase III of the program which ended Dec. 31, 2008. At our year end June 30, 2015, our fund had a market value of \$182,602. PLEASE NOTE: we no longer accept donations to the Endowment Fund.

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The Campaign to End the Deficit, 2011

At our fiscal year end of June 30, 2011, we paid off our accumulated deficit. We want to thank everyone who made a donation of any kind in the 19 years between 1992 and 2011. Operating surpluses every year paid down an accumulated deficit that started at \$378,326.

For the final 20% paid off in 2011, we wish to offer special thanks to:

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*Dinner & Silent Auction
at Scaramouche Restaurant*

May 22, 2015

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