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Friday December 2, 2016

The Music Gallery, 197 John Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts and The Music Gallery present:


SLOWMIND



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The Music Gallery, 197 John Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts and The Music Gallery present:

SLOWMIND

Slovenian Woodwind Quintet

— Illuminating Introduction @ 7:15 —

A Slovenian Perspective on the Woodwind Quintet

— Concert @ 8:00 —

Elliott Carter (USA 1908-2012)

Retracing for solo bassoon (2002)

Niels Rosing-Schow (Denmark 1954)

Five Studies (1979/2012)

1. Fluente 2. Quasi lontano 3. Dolce 4. Con fuoco 5. Con delicatezza

Ivan Fedele (Italy 1953)

Flamen (1994)

Salvatore Sciarrino (Italy 1947)

Il silenzio degli oracoli (1989)

— Intermission —

Nina Šenk (Slovenia 1982)

Silhouettes and Shadows (2016)

Toshio Hosokawa (Japan 1955)

Ancient Voices (2013)

Robert Aitken (Canada 1939)

Folia (1981)

Slowind Woodwind Quintet: Aleš Kacjan, flute Matej Šarc, oboe
Jurij Jenko, clarinet Metod Tomac, horn Paolo Calligaris, bassoon

*Please join us in the Fellowship Room for a reception following the concert,
courtesy of the New Music Concerts Board of Directors*

John Maclean recording engineer | Sandor Ajzenstat stage manager
PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES AND OTHER DEVICES!

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.

Retracing is excerpted from *Asko Concerto* (2000). It was first performed by Peter Kolkay at Weill Recital Hall, New York, in 2002. My *Asko Concerto* for sixteen players features each one of them participating in one of the following groups — two trios, two duos, a quintet or a solo. These six sections are framed by the entire group playing together. Although the music is in lighthearted mood, each soloistic section approaches ensemble playing in a different spirit. The score was commissioned by the Dutch Asko Ensemble from Amsterdam that has performed so many of my works. It was composed largely during January 2000 in New York City. — *Elliott Carter*

Niels Rosing-Schow graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in Copenhagen majoring in music theory and history. He studied composition with Prof. Ib Nørholm, between 1984 and '87 followed by a short study trip to Paris. He now teaches music theory and composition at the Royal Academy of Music as well as having held several organizational posts in the musical life of Denmark. Niels Rosing-Schow started his career as a composer in the early 70s with the Group for Alternative Music. Rosing-Schow's works from the 70s are characterized by his constructive use of tonality and polyrhythmic stratification. In the early 80s he approached a more concentrated lyrical expression in - among others - a series of vocal works, whereas his works from the mid-80s signal an increasing interest in a more extroverted expression.

About 1990 this evolved into an intense preoccupation with the dramatic and expansive possibilities within the musical substance. In his recent works Rosing-Schow has worked with a formal process concept, incorporating elements inspired by French spectral music.

The musical material in my *Five Studies* for wind quintet dates back to 1984, where four of the movements appear as a piece with the title *Four Studies*. The additional second movement *Quasi lontanò*, has roots even further back, that is in my first attempt to compose a wind quintet in 1973. The material from these earlier compositions has been substantially reviewed in this 'updated' version, but still the music is characterized by a time of fresh inspirations from György Ligeti and the Danish variety of 'new simplicity'. Despite the neutral title 'studies', these five short movements are more than just etudes exploring the wind quintet's diverse tonal possibilities; it contains five contrasting musical situations, each encompassing a tapered musical point.

— *Niels Rosing-Schow*

Ivan Fedele was born in Lecce in 1953. He studied piano with B. Canino, V. Vitale and I. Deckers, and composition under the guidance of R. Dionisi, A. Corghi and F. Donatoni. At the same time, he studied philosophy at the University of Milan, with E. Paci, L. Geymonat, R. Mangione and R. Cantoni. He owes to his father, a mathematician, the passion for mathematics, as it becomes evident in his compositional researches, including the examination and use of the concept of "spatialisation", the formulation of a "library" of creative processes and the definition of a prototype of "granular synthesizer". In addition to a large body of chamber music, he has also written works for orchestra alone or with concertante instrument, as well as vocal-orchestral pieces. Ivan Fedele also has an active academic career and has been associated with numerous important institutions.

Even when writing for the more intimate domain of the wind quintet, Fedele continues to pursue the idea of sound as a representation of space. In *Flamen* (in Latin "breath"), the five instruments are set quite far apart from each other and on raised platforms of differing heights, so that they form a type of arch made up, from left to right, of the flute, oboe, horn (in the centre, at the innermost and highest point), bassoon and clarinet. As in *Richiamo*, the geometry of the sound sources is conceived not only to obtain effects of resonance and reverberation, but more especially so that the figures that underpin the composition follow different routes in space in accordance with the principles of attraction, symmetry and stratification that govern the interaction between the five instruments. These figures are not melodic or

thematic patterns, but rather thread-like arabesques that derive from the historical repertory of embellishments (turns, rapid repeated notes, quivering arpeggios, appoggiaturas, acciaccaturas, trills) and define a sonic and physical space that is changeable and ephemeral. The whole of the first part follows this modality with systematic obstinacy and dazzling virtuosity. The second, which starts with a long held note on the horn, presents various segments characterised by quieter and more reflexive material; each time, however, they are attacked, at first timidly and then more openly, until being finally overwhelmed by the return of the opening figures in continuous and frenetic transformation.

— Claudio Proietti

Salvatore Sciarrino (Italy 1947)

Il silenzio degli oracoli (1989)

Salvatore Sciarrino (Palermo, 1947) boasts of being born free and not in a music school. He started composing when he was twelve as a self-taught person and held his first public concert in 1962. After his classical studies and a few years of university in his home city, the Sicilian composer moved to Rome in 1969 and in 1977 to Milan. Since 1983, he has lived in Città di Castello, in Umbria. He was published by Ricordi from 1969 to 2004. Since 2005, Rai Trade has had exclusive rights for Sciarrino's works. Sciarrino's discography includes over 100 CDs, published by the best international record labels and very often awarded and admired. Apart from being author of most of his theatre opera's librettos, Sciarrino has authored a rich production of articles, essays and texts of various genres. Particularly important is his interdisciplinary book about musical form: *Le figure della musica, da Beethoven a oggi*, Ricordi 1998. Sciarrino taught at the Music Academies of Milan (1974–83), Perugia (1983–87) and Florence (1987–96). He also worked as a teacher in various specialization courses and master classes among which are those held in Città di Castello from 1979 to 2000.

Oceans of subtle and delicate sounds strewn with islands of mighty power. This is how we could briefly describe the musical language of the Italian composer Salvatore Sciarrino, which is well manifested in *Il Silenzio degli oracoli* (Silence of the Oracles). A feature of this piece is the use of atypical sounds of wind instruments to the extent that, despite the appropriate instrumentation, it can hardly, or not at all, be called a composition for wind quintet. There is no melody, counterpoint or harmony in it; only noises, pops, rustling, echoes, whistles and even bizarre cries. The veiled sounds of breathing into the instruments, the flute jet whistle tones and the mysterious multiphonic tones of the oboe and bassoon sound like mysterious voices originating from the "beyond". — Matej Šarc

Nina Šenk (Slovenia 1982)

Silhouettes and Shadows (2016)

The young Slovenian composer **Nina Šenk** (born 1982) graduated in composition from the Ljubljana Music Academy in the class of Pavel Mihelčič in 2005. She then undertook postgraduate studies at the Dresden University of Music under Lothar Voigtländer from 2005 to 2007, and at the Munich University for Music and Performing Arts under Matthias Pintscher (2007–2008). While studying, she received several awards, including the European Award for best composition at the festival Young Euro Classic for her Violin Concerto (2004), the Prešeren Award of the Ljubljana Academy of Music, and first prize in the Festival of Contemporary Music in Weimar, Germany for the composition *Movimento fluido* (2008). Her compositions have been performed at important festivals both in Slovenia and abroad and in concerts around the world with various orchestras and by renowned ensembles. In the seasons 2008/2009 and 2009/2010, Nina Šenk was the resident composer of the Orchestra of the State Theatre of Cottbus, Germany.

The first idea while thinking about *Silhouettes and Shadows* was a line that flows in various ways from one instrument to another, from a solo line all the way to homophony. From the quintet, I have tried to create one single source of line (silhouette), sometimes colouring it with shade (chips of line). I deliberately avoided too broad an ambit of notes, because I wanted to achieve a narrowness, a collective density, a single density of sonority, from which no one colour stands out.

The composition is demanding due to the compact range of dynamics, from soft to as soft as possible, realised in fast and faster tempi, and due to the sensitive transitions of the line from one instrument to another, which must always flow from one to the next. Due to the diversity of the instruments, this was an interesting and demanding challenge while composing, and I have no doubt that this challenge will open up ever new performance possibilities for the performers. The composition is dedicated to the wind quintet Slowind and was first performed on 24 October 2016 at 18th Festival Slowind 2016 in Ljubljana. — Nina Šenk

Toshio Hosokawa (Japan 1955)

Ancient Voices (2013)

Toshio Hosokawa was born in Hiroshima on 23 October 1955. Following initial studies in piano and composition in Tokyo, he came to Berlin in 1976 to study composition with Isang Yun at the Universität der Künste. He continued his studies with Klaus Huber at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg from 1983 to 1986. In 1980, he participated for the first time in the Darmstädter Ferienkurse für Neue Musik where some of his compositions were performed. From 1990, he was a regular guest of the festival as a tutor. In subsequent years, the composer's reputation

continued to increase within the international contemporary music scene and Hosokawa received numerous commissions. From 1989 to 1998, the composer was the artistic director and organiser of the annual Akiyoshidai International Contemporary Music Seminar and Festival in Yamagushi which he had co-founded. Since 2001, he has additionally been the artistic director of the Japanese Takefu International Music Festival in Fukuj. He was appointed permanent guest professor at the Tokyo College of Music in 2004. Hosokawa lives in Nagano, Japan and in Mainz, Germany.

The work *Ancient Voices* was written for and commissioned by Ensemble Wien-Berlin for their 30th anniversary. I received the obituary of Wolfgang Schultz who was the core member of this ensemble while working on the structure of this. I dedicate this work to him.

My music always has ritualistic essence that music could contain. Music could calm the human soul, and could have the role of giving life to the invisible area of the heart. My music is not meant to have an influence on human intelligence but rather to a human body and "chi." I would like to express "chi," the source of energy of life that propels human and nature.

This music shows the characteristic of my music, where the melodic line of each note has a curved form, like those in Eastern writings. Those lines tangle with each other like plants, and form the universe of Yin and Yang (light and shadow, male and female, high and low, strong and weak), while creating ritualistic music.

—Toshio Hosokawa

Robert Aitken (Canada 1939)

Folia (1981)

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 Carsen 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.

Aitken's "Scherzo for Woodwind Quintet" *Folia* was commissioned by the York Winds with the assistance of the Canada Council in 1981 and was composed in the fall of that year at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire. Both the time and place of the work's creation are commemorated in the title of this work, which reveals the composer's intention to "reflect the random order and rich colours of nature as exhibited by tree and 'foliage' while maintaining a high lever of intensity throughout. Even the few sustained passages offer the musicians extra technical challenges such as trills of variable speed, flutter tonguing and simultaneous singing and playing." The dense forest of notes that evolve from the wooden instruments that send forth the first roots of the work may indeed strike certain listeners as 'random', yet they are in fact derived from the subtle change ringing of a carefully chosen series of notes and durations: "The music follows an idea of all things relating and flowing into each other and, while there are certain random aspects, it is not at all a 'free piece'." Towards the conclusion of the composition a measured degree of rhythmic freedom is introduced, before giving way to a single, sustained harmony that sounds the intervallic 'seed' of the work: "The melodic and harmonic material is entirely based on a major/minor ninth chord in all its inversions which, coloured with unusual overtones, slips in and out of focus, much like the variety of autumn foliage. Hints of relaxation and timbral changes are achieved by varying the density of the texture, suggestive of the wildness of nature." — Daniel Foley

SLOWIND Woodwind Quintet

The wind quintet **Slowind** was established twenty-two years ago. Since then, the ensemble, which performs virtually the entire standard repertoire for wind quintet, has established a reputation as an uncompromising performer of contemporary works, and is the most active ensemble in this field in Slovenia. Its contemporary repertoire ranges from the classics of the avant-garde to works by the youngest composers of our time, artists who are perhaps less known but full of promise. By regularly commissioning new works, Slowind encourages young Slovenian composers, who respond enthusiastically to the opportunity to have their new works performed on many European stages. At the same time, the quintet has for many years worked closely with established international composers, such as Vinko Globokar, Robert Aitken, Heinz Holliger, Jürg Wyttenbach, Toshio Hosokawa, Uroš Rojko, Martin Smolka, Volker Staub, Ivo Nilsson, Nina Šenk, Gérard Buquet, Lojze Lebič, Niels Rosing Schow, Vito Žuraj, Beat Furrer and others, who dedicate works to Slowind and include the ensemble in their own projects. Slowind is a regular guest of

some of the most important venues for contemporary music: Ars Musica Brussels, Biennale Bern, Klangspuren Innsbruck, the New Music Concert Series Toronto, Contempuls Prague, Théâtre Dunois Paris, the Venice Biennale, the Zagreb Music Biennale and the Takefu International Music Festival (Japan). In 2014 alone, the jubilee twentieth year of ensemble's existence, Slowind performed three concerts in Paris, seven in the United States and three in Denmark. Last year, in addition to concerts in Slovenia, the quintet appeared at the festival music@villaromana in Florence, Synergien San Polo, and the Venice and Zagreb Biennales, as well as giving concerts in Berlin, Japan (Takefu, Hiroshima, Tokyo) and Geneva. This year, Slowind has performed in Cluny in France and Rotweil in Germany (in the concert cycle Ars Nova, prepared by the German Radio SWR).

On the domestic scene, the ensemble has in recent years increased its activities in the field of Slovenian music by organising a short music festival in the spring months entitled Slowind Spring, while autumn remains dedicated to the Slowind Festival. This year sees the eighteenth Slowind Festival in a row. Whereas the cycle was initially enriched mainly by contributions from eminent artists who performed with the ensemble — Robert Aitken, Heinz Holliger, Alexander Lonquich, Arvid Engegård, Aleksandar Madžar, Steven Davislim, Christiane Iven, Matthias Pintscher, Matthias Würsch, Naoko Yoshino, Mayumi Miyata and others — it has over the years developed into a real movement. The promotion of international contemporary chamber music repertoire, as well as the comprehensive presentation of some of the giants of 20th century music who are less known in Slovenia (Edgard Varèse, Elliott Carter, Vinko Globokar, Tōru Takemitsu, Ivan Fedele) has been joined by a growing number of foreign contemporary music ensembles, as well as by members of Slovenian symphony orchestras and established chamber groups and choirs. The festival programme is regularly recorded and broadcast by Radio Slovenia, with the concert recordings also being broadcast by foreign radio stations: BBC 3, Radio Netherlands and others. For its activities to date, Slowind received the Župančič Prize in 1999, the Prešeren Fund Prize in 2003, and the Betetto Prize in 2013. Our web site is: www.slowind.eu.

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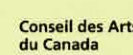
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