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46th season | 387th event

Sunday February 5, 2017

Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park

New Music Concerts presents:

a portrait of
Salvatore Sciarrino

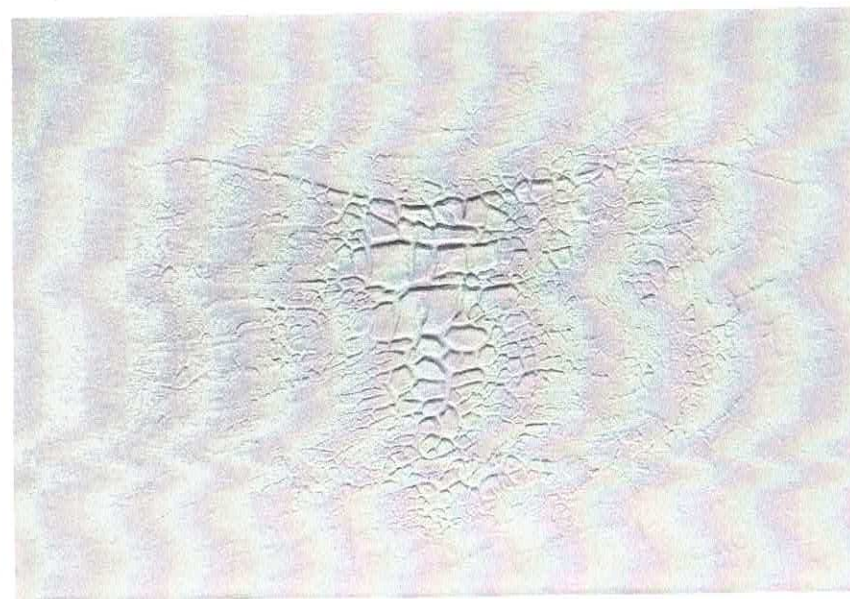



Illustration: Alberto Burri, from the *Creti* series

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New Music Concerts presents:

a portrait of
**Salvatore
Sciarrino**

PROGRAMME:

— *Illuminating Introduction* @ 7:15 —

A Different Sound World with Salvatore Sciarrino and Robert Aitken

— *Concert* @ 8:00 —

Salvatore Sciarrino (Italy 1947)

Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor in Composition, University of Toronto Faculty of Music

Introduzione all'oscuro for 12 instruments (1981)

Dianne Aitken flute Keith Atkinson oboe Max Christie clarinet Peter Lutek bassoon Chris Gongos horn
James Gardiner trumpet Scott Good trombone Stephen Sitarski, Aysel Taghi-Zada violins Douglas Perry viola
Amahl Arulanandam cello Roberto Occhipinti contrabass Robert Aitken direction

Trovare un equilibrio, è necessario? for flute and string quartet (2015)

Robert Aitken alto flute Stephen Sitarski, Aysel Taghi-Zada violins Douglas Perry viola Amahl Arulanandam cello

Vagabonde Blu for accordion (1998)

Branko Džinović accordion

Archeologia del telefono concertante for 13 instruments (2005)

Dianne Aitken flute Keith Atkinson oboe Max Christie clarinet Peter Lutek bassoon Chris Gongos horn
James Gardiner trumpet Stephen Clarke piano Rick Sacks, David Schotzko percussion Stephen Sitarski, Aysel Taghi-Zada
violins Douglas Perry viola Amahl Arulanandam cello Roberto Occhipinti contrabass Robert Aitken direction

Wine and Cheese Reception courtesy of the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, at 496 Huron St. All are welcome.



New Music Concerts

Robert Aitken, c.m., Artistic Director

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Salvatore Sciarrino (Palermo, 1947) boasts of being born free and not in a music school. He taught himself composition at twelve and held his first public concert in 1962. Sciarrino considers all his works written before 1966 as a developing apprenticeship because that is when his personal style began to reveal itself. There is something really particular that characterizes this music: it leads to a different way of listening, a global emotional realization, of reality as well as of one's self. And after forty years, the extensive catalogue of Sciarrino's compositions is still in a phase of surprising creative development. 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.

Sciarrino has composed for Teatro alla Scala, RAI, Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Biennale di Venezia, Teatro La Fenice di Venezia, Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova, Fondazione Arena di Verona, Stuttgart Opera Theatre, Brussels La Monnaie, Frankfurt Opera Theatre, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, London Symphony Orchestra and Tokyo Suntory Hall. His works have been premiered at numerous festivals, including the Schwetzingen Festspiele, Donaueschinger Musiktage, Witten, Salzburg, New York, Wien Modern, Wiener Festwochen, Berliner Festspiele Musik, Holland Festival, Aldborough, Festival d'Automne (Paris) and Ultima (Oslo).

He was published by Ricordi from 1969 to 2004. Since 2005, Rai Trade has had exclusive rights for Sciarrino's works. Sciarrino's discography is extensive and includes over 100 CDs, published by the finest international record labels and very often awarded and noted. Apart from being author of most of his theatre opera's librettos, Sciarrino wrote a rich production of articles, essays and texts of various genres some of which have been chosen and collected in *Carte da suono*, CIDIM - Novecento, 2001. 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. From 1978 to 1980, he was Artistic Director of Teatro Comunale di Bologna and lectured at Rome, Bavaria and Berlin. Sciarrino has won many awards, including the Prince Pierre de Monaco Prize (2003) and the prestigious Feltrinelli International Award (Premio Internazionale Feltrinelli, 2003). He was also the initial prizewinner of the newly created Salzburg Music Prize (2006).

Introduzione all'oscuro for 12 instruments (1981)

Usually what is called an "introduction" is a piece of music preceding another one, announcing and suggesting — sometimes with contrasting characteristics — some elements of the piece to come. This is not the case with this "Introduction to the Obscure" where this word fully assumes the meaning of "waiting."

With *Introduzione all'Oscuro*, imitation, the transfer of certain physiological sounds is evident: a kind of objectivization, a mute dramatization of heartbeats and breathing. Here the music tends to reverse the terms, absence and presence, moving them towards the "spectral." What is announced is not perceived: only a blind and enigmatic movement is left, the speeding up and the slowing down of periodic beats.

Echoes of songs make their appearance — tatters of existence in a tense environment — not only with the magical indifference of what is familiar to us, but with almost limpid epiphanies.

— Programme note for the "Quatrième Festival de Musique Contemporaine Italienne" concert performed on Thursday April 4th, 1996. (Translation by Elisabeth Frecaut and Paul Walty)

Trovare un equilibrio, è necessario? for flute and string quartet (2015)

Whether consciously or not, the artist interprets history; he reads the complexity of the world. He has to choose perspectives that others do not adopt: otherwise he would not achieve originality, nor stand out from the context where he grew up. Each composition worthy of its name should not generically offer "something," rather it should try to change society. When it is new, it burns, it is inherently problematic, it poses questions. The work is born restless and, because of that, it gives, to those who seek it, the pleasure of discovery, and of awareness. Through creative language, we are led beyond everyday life, and rendered able to understand it better.

My titles have often included a question mark. The issue of balance here deals mainly with musical form, but also, covertly, it tells of the behaviour and discipline at the heart of artistic language, where concision, and subtraction, are the secret principle and goal. Because of its free thinking, a work can sometimes include an apparent incoherence, caused by its imaginative impulse: it will appear unusual, and extreme. Normalising art is indeed the most frequent crime politicians commit against civilisation. Culture irritates them, because it counters banality, it counters an enjoyment that numbs us and does not awaken us. Art demands effort, and it bores only those who are unable to conquer it. For this reason the composer has to seek new connections: to remote shapes no one can hear, and to those that are so close that no one can discern. The musician,

like the poet, has to compute the incalculable, plan the unpredictable; hence, you, the listener, clear your mind, let yourself be carried, and shudder at the sounds you experience, but embrace them.

I have written a lot about [Alberto] Burri's painting. A lot of personal memories surface; but those are details; this does not seem the place to tell them, because we are celebrating his centenary. Let the music unravel the tale with its breath, its clarity of light, of horizons: an emotion that nothing can match.

— Salvatore Sciarrino (translation: Andrea Fontemaggi)

Vagabonde Blu for accordion (1998)

The accordion gives off an intense scent, that of all the suburbs of the world, a mixture of dance and misery. That scent is invincible; we can only evoke it and now abandon ourselves to it.

What is the quintessence? The accordion inspires and exhales, like a lung, a breath animates it. That means a trace of humanity is in its mechanism, perhaps a fearful sensibility that renders it an erotic and pathetic instrument, docile in the arms of the player.

The expression "blue vagabond" [in English, a "Blue Straggler"] comes from astronomy: it is used to designate certain types of stars. By using it I playfully referenced the anthologies for accordion virtuosos, among whose colourful and a bit flashy titles a taste of Art Nouveau and its modernist society, sophisticated beyond Messiaen, still finds its place.

Restlessness is hidden in the term to vagabond, and in Italian "vago" (vague) means confused and indistinctive. Beautiful and instable, as well, since in ancient Italian "Vago" meant lover.

For Italian archeologists a "vago" is a grain of a necklace. Strangely, the term offers ambiguity: because it has a hole or it runs on a string, or because by bouncing it gets lost?

Dedicated to Teodoro Anzellotti.

— Salvatore Sciarrino (1999) (Translation: Tiziana Miano, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Toronto)

Archeologia del telefono concertante for 13 instruments (2005)

The archeology of the present helps us create a good short-circuit of the mind. Our days, that we deem "modern," suddenly belong — in this new perspective — to the realm of the inanimate. Irony then rediscovers

objects, and makes them alive again, as they are the subject of a glance that comes from the outside, maybe from the future: in fact, life, without death, is not complete. In a way, everything needs to "become" in order to reach our consciousness. A side light is necessary to render its identity free from banality.

My compositions tend to dry up, my structures to be self-representative, the discourse wants to become reality, at least on the face of it, while the act of listening is reduced to zero, and perceive, transfigured, sounds and silence. In *Archeology of the Telephone* soloist presences alternate with static moments where music is disguised as technological signal; even remaining instrumental, it hides behind neutral line tones.

Tempo di Policronio is the indication at the opening of the score, following a certain tempo madness which is my habit. This ancient name (*Policronio*, "of many tempos"), used in the early Byzantine age, perfectly embodies the dimensional incoherence produced by current technologies. The nature of technologic communication is intermittent and random. The line is open then closed; it generates a ritual of proposal or refusal, set in an experience that is strongly relative insofar as it is offered to all location variables.

Free line, busy line signals, correspond to reactions and psychological conditions of rewarded or frustrated waiting. The drama of musical discourse is always present in my music, but it sometimes declares itself and becomes apparent (as in *Efebo con radio* and *Cadenzario*), then sound dramaturgy becomes an essential exercise in order to bare our conditionings, and even smile at them. If used with intelligence, technology brings to our door the marvelous results of human intelligence. We are nevertheless besieged by the false myth of fashion, an irresistible myth that, though generated by technology, somehow identifies with it.

In fact, it is not the latest invention that makes us modern: every technological update, when spread by the media, is reduced to its purely commercial essence. Let me give an example. It is not the latest microphone that gives us the best sound. Contrary to what many think, there is no artistic formula for modernity. If the TV screen has isolated the individual from his life of relations, closed him in his cell, now the technology of cellular phones deprives our discourse of reflection. Chit-chat is everywhere, it fills every moment. The time stream is now thick with words that build no contact, only the skin of a dialogue. With their apparent openness to others, cell phones induce a limitless availability, making relations something unreal, but sticky. I, owning no cell phone, can observe peculiar behaviors, showing solitary expressions: obsessions, once belonging to the household, now set on sidewalks, domestic dramas now appearing in trains and everywhere else.

Italians underwent a massive brainwash by a ghastly television. More recently, they gained pre-eminence in the use of cell phones: a primacy of dependence and loss. I wonder who could truly research the harmfulness of relay stations. As for cell phones, as soon as the first models (now waiting to appear in antiques collections) were out, it was already known they damaged the brain. But we, intoxicated by their first waves, did not care, and we banished smoke, whose poison had its day.

With the widespread diffusion of cell phones, we can never cease to talk, with a deceptive form of exclusiveness, substituting closeness; a great confusion is taking place, a corrosive mixture of marketing and private life. We are constantly waiting for a call, to pull us away from our indifferent solitude.

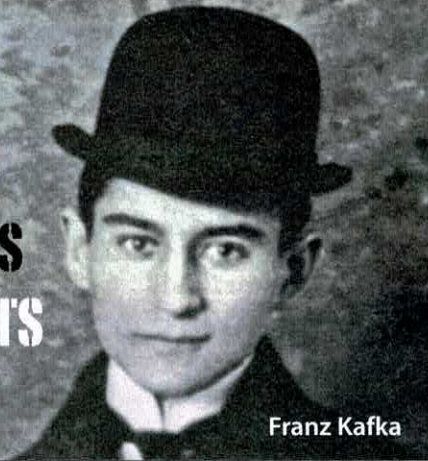
A personalized ring, chosen, that is, among the obvious sublimities of jokes. Too many people think they are "personalized," while toying with a few identical banalities. Meowing, chirps, old telephone rings: a rich showcase of short "sound finds," ambitious and ephemeral, to impress your neighbor. I keep imagining these devices when, sad and triumphant, they will lay on the shelves of a museum.

— Salvatore Sciarrino (2005) (translated by Andrea Fontemaggi)

Branko Džinović is a Toronto-based accordionist focused on the contemporary repertoire for the accordion. He holds a Master's degree from the Anton Bruckner Private University for Music, Drama, and Dance in Linz (Austria) and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) degree in performance at the University of Toronto, where he is the teaching assistant to Prof. Joseph Macerollo, O.C. He took part in numerous accordion competitions and has been the grand-prize winner at the "Accordion World Cup" held in London (UK) in 2001, "Das Podium" competition held in Linz in 2004, and the DMA Recital Competition held at the University of Toronto in 2013. Being an avid proponent of avant-garde music, he has shared the stage with some of the finest improvisers of today. He has collaborated on many projects with the members of the Array Ensemble, Thin Edge Music Collective, Essential Opera, TorQ Percussion Quartet, Toy Piano Composers Ensemble, and many more. As an artist with a strong interest in contemporary music, Branko regularly collaborates with Canadian composers on the creation of new solo and chamber music works for the accordion. He also took part in creative interactions with some of the most prominent contemporary composers of today such as Per Nørgård and Phillipe Leroux. Džinović has recorded for Radio Belgrade, Radio Austria 1, and the BBC. As a soloist and a chamber musician, he has toured in the United States, Canada, England, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Austria, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, and the Czech Republic.

Sunday March 26, 2017
(non-subscription event)

GYÖRGY KURTÁG'S KAFFKA FRAGMENTS



Franz Kafka

Tony Arnold soprano | **Movses Pogossian** violin
Doors open @ 7:00 | Gallery 345, 345 Sorauren Ave.
RSVP 416.961.9594

The evening features a performance of the iconic work and video of Kurtág coaching the performers. Tickets \$100 (2 for \$150) include door prizes, gourmet delights and libations with proceeds to benefit New Music Concerts. A charitable receipt will be issued for the CRA allowable portion.

Soprano Tony Arnold and violinist Movses Pogossian have worked extensively with the composer; they delight in conveying the spirit and intensity of this great master to audiences worldwide. Together, they have performed Kafka Fragments in over 30 venues, including major international festivals, university concert series and in educational masterclasses.

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