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47<sup>th</sup> season | 389<sup>th</sup> event

**Sunday October 22, 2017**

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

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

**MELTAR**  
ENSEMBLE



47<sup>th</sup> season | 389<sup>th</sup> 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  
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Robert Aitken, c.m., Artistic Director

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**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 Schäeffler 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



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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**

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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

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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.

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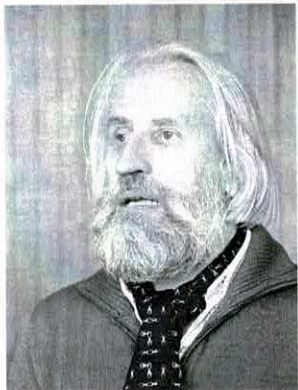
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### **In Memoriam Klaus Huber**

Swiss composer, conductor and violinist Klaus Huber, a towering figure in modern music, died at the age of 92 in Perugia, Italy on October 2. Born in Bern in 1924, Huber studied violin and music pedagogy at the Zurich Conservatory and composition there with Willy Burkhard followed by further studies with Boris Blacher in Berlin. He was one of the most important composers of our time and was awarded numerous prizes, including the Ernst von Siemens Music

Prize and the Salzburg Music Prize. Huber taught composition at the City of Basel Music Academy (1961-72) and at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg (1973-90). Additionally, he held international visiting professorships and composition classes in (among others) Paris, London, Geneva, Milan, Lyon, Montreal, Sarajevo and Tatui (Brazil). Several of his students became internationally recognized composers, including Brian Ferneyhough, Kaija Saariaho, Toshio Hosokawa, Wolfgang Rihm and Younghi Pagh-Paan (who later became his wife). His manuscripts are preserved by the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel. In 1993 Huber and Pagh-Paan's music was featured during NMC's International Accordion Celebration events on March 27 & 28. More recently, Huber's *Rauhe Pinselspitze* for Pansori ensemble was heard during our Korean Music Project concerts in December 2012.