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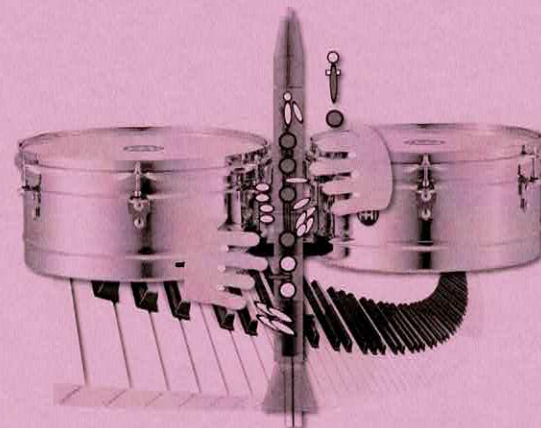
47<sup>th</sup> season | 390<sup>th</sup> event

**Sunday December 3, 2017**

Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts presents:

# CONCERTOS



Max Christie clarinet Eve Egoyan piano Ryan Scott percussion

NMC Ensemble directed by Robert Aitken



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*Programme:*

**Elliott Carter** (USA 1908–2012)

String Trio (2011, Canadian premiere)

**Accordes:** Stephen Sitarski violin Doug Perry viola David Hetherington cello

**Paul Frehner** (Canada b.1970)

Clarinet Concerto "Cloak" (2016, World premiere)

Max Christie solo clarinet Doug Stewart flute Keith Atkinson oboe Fraser Jackson bassoon

Chris Gongos horn Jim Gardiner trumpet Ian Cowie trombone Rick Sacks percussion

Stephen Clarke piano/celeste Stephen Sitarski violin Doug Perry viola

David Hetherington cello Adam Scime contrabass Robert Aitken direction

— *Intermission* —

**Linda C. Smith** (USA/Canada b.1957)

*Path of Uneven Stones* (1986)

Eve Egoyan solo piano Doug Stewart flute Max Christie, Michele Verheul clarinets

Chris Gongos, Bardhyl Gjevori horns Ian Cowie trombone Rick Sacks percussion Erica Goodman harp

Stephen Sitarski, Carol Lynn Fujino violins Doug Perry viola Robert Aitken direction

*Eve Egoyan is represented by Latitude 45 artist management*

**Robin de Raaff** (Netherlands b.1968)

Percussion Concerto (2013)

Ryan Scott solo percussion Doug Stewart flute Keith Atkinson oboe Max Christie clarinet

Fraser Jackson bassoon Chris Gongos horn Jim Gardiner trumpet Ian Cowie trombone Rick Sacks percussion

Stephen Clarke piano Erica Goodman harp Stephen Sitarski, Carol Lynn Fujino violins Doug Perry viola

David Hetherington cello Adam Scime contrabass Robert Aitken direction

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# New Music Concerts

Robert Aitken, c.m., Artistic Director

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Elliott Carter (USA 1908-2012)

String Trio (2011, Canadian premiere)

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.

In planning to compose this string trio I realized that the viola had a more somber sound than the more brilliant violin and cello. While held like the violin, it is somewhat larger which forces the fingers that stop the strings to reach further for high notes. Therefore, I felt that I would make the viola have its own voice and be the most prominent member of the ensemble. The work is dedicated to Rolf Schulte, Richard O'Neill and Fred Sherry. It was composed in May, 2011. — *Elliott Carter*

**Accordes** evolved out of a string quintet that was formed in 1975 to perform a composition by John Beckwith. Frequently heard on CBC radio, they have performed on the Roy Thomson Hall Chamber Music Series and constitute the core string players of the New Music Concerts series. This concentration on contemporary music has allowed Accordes to give Canadian, and sometimes world, premieres of works by such composers as Elliott Carter, Ben Johnston, Peter Paul Kropowski, Brian Cherney, Peter Michael Hamel, Michael Tippett, Henri Dutilleux, György Kurtág, Jörg Widmann, Ann Southam and Hope Lee. They have recorded extensively for the Canadian Music Centre label Centrediscs, including albums devoted to the music of Harry Freedman (*Spirit Song*), Harry Somers (*Somers String Quartets*, nominated for a JUNO award in 2001) and Alexina Louie (*Dénouement*). Their recording of NMC co-founder Norma Beecroft's *Amplified String Quartet with Tape* was nominated for a JUNO in 2004. Internationally, Accordes travelled to Cologne with Robert Aitken in 2004 to perform a program of Lithuanian music including works by Balakauskas, Kutavicius and *The Oriental Elegy* by Raminta Šerkšnytė, a NMC commission. More recently in 2013, under the auspices of Soundstreams, they travelled to Taiwan to perform Tan Dun's *Ghost Opera* and to Beijing for the Beijing Modern Music Festival.

**Paul Frehner's** works have been performed by an array of outstanding artists, ensembles, orchestras and opera companies including Almeida Opera, Aldeburgh Productions, Soundstreams Canada, Continuum New York, the OSM, The TSO, Esprit Orchestra, the Stuttgart Chamber Choir, Aventa Ensemble, the Prague Philharmonia, the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, the North Holland Philharmonic Orchestra, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, ECM+ and the Gryphon Trio. He has received numerous international and national awards for his compositions, including First Prize in the Jeunesses Musicales World Orchestra's International Composition Competition for *Overture 2000*, First Prize in the Prague Philharmonia's Symphony of the Third Millennium Composition Competition (2001) for his orchestral work *Elixirs*, Second Prize in the Genesis Prizes for *Opera* (2003), a Finalist Award in the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra's International Composers Award competition (2004) and the Claude Vivier National Award in the OSM' International Composition Competition for *Lila* (2007). In 2012 he was awarded the K.M. Hunter Artist Award in Classical Music administered by the OAC. Paul Frehner is on the Faculty of Music of Western University where he teaches composition and electroacoustic music and co-directs the Contemporary Music Studio. [www.paulfrehner.com](http://www.paulfrehner.com)

My Concerto for Clarinet and Ensemble, subtitled "Cloak", explores a range of expression and technique in its three movements. The subtitle of the concerto is a nod toward the shadowy ambience evoked in espionage novels by authors like John le Carré and Olin Steinhauer, which are a source of inspiration for the mood of the work. The meaning of the subtitle also hints at something that is secret, or that is hidden from view.

In the first movement the clarinet's role is untraditional with regard to concerto form. Instead of occupying the role of the soloist, the clarinet, through most of the movement, plays a subtle, coloristic role, giving the overall instrumental timbre a shimmering quality through the use of multiphonics. These multiphonic sonorities have both harmonic and inharmonic properties in relation to the underlying harmony, causing soft beating patterns to emerge from the texture. There are two passages in the movement in which the clarinet has a more overtly soloistic role, hinting at what is to come. The clarinet is revealed as the soloist of the work in the second movement, where it plays a quasi-improvisatory and florid obbligato part over a contrapuntal accompaniment in the ensemble. The third movement resembles a more traditional concerto form with the focus moving between the soloist and ensemble in alternating passages. In the climax of the work, a theme that has been previously heard in various secondary guises over the first two movements emerges as perhaps the principle theme of the concerto, played here by the clarinet, violin and viola over a full accompaniment. In the

concluding section motivic material from the first movement is revisited and played in alternation by the soloist and ensemble in new transformations, giving the listener a new perspective on the material. — *Paul Frehner*

Clarinetist **Max Christie's** career is defined by excellence and versatility. As comfortable in the soloist's role as he is in the orchestra, he is a gifted chamber musician as well an insightful experienced interpreter of the most important modern and contemporary works. Mr. Christie has performed and toured with the National Ballet Orchestra, where he holds the principal clarinet chair, as well as with the Canadian Opera Company, Esprit Orchestra and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared as soloist with the TSO, the Calgary Philharmonic, Esprit Orchestra, Kitchener Waterloo Symphony and the Windsor Symphony. The former principal clarinet of Esprit Orchestra, he remains a devoted champion of new music, especially by young Canadian composers. He has recorded and performed with the most prominent contemporary music ensembles in the country, including Toca Loca, Soundstreams, Continuum Contemporary Music, Array Music and New Music Concerts. His recording of Elliott Carter's music, including the solo work *Gra*, is available on the Naxos Label. *The Spawn of Abe*, a double concerto with oboe by MC Maguire, was released on the Innova label. He recorded with David Occhipinti on the disc *camera*, and with Patricia O'Callaghan on her release of the songs of George Gershwin. He has also recorded the music of Harry Somers and Rudolph Kourmorous. Contemporary solo performances include the works by Gavin Bryars, Anders Hillborg, Heather Schmitt and Michel Gonnevillle. On stage, he has accompanied some of the finest dancers in the country with the National Ballet of Canada and with Peggy Baker Dance Projects. Recently he branched out into the world of theatre, in a workshop production of *Charlotte Salomon: Life? or Theatre?* with Canadian Stage.

**Linda Catlin Smith** grew up in New York and lives in Toronto. She began her composition studies in high school in NY, with composer Allen Shawn, and continued her music studies at SUNY Stony Brook. In 1977, she traveled to Canada to study composition and theory with composers Rudolf Kourmorous, Martin Bartlett, John Celona, Michael Longton and Jo Kondo at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. She moved to Toronto in 1981 and in 1986, was invited by Morton Feldman to attend his lectures, as a guest, at SUNY/Buffalo, NY. Her music has been performed and/or recorded by: Tafelmusik, Tectonics Festival (Glasgow), Trio Arbos (Madrid), Victoria, Kitchener-Waterloo and Vancouver Symphony Orchestras, Arraymusic, Tapestry New Opera, Via Salzburg, Evergreen Club Gamelan, and the Del Sol, Penderecki, and Bozzini string quartets, as well as by soloists including Eve Egoyan, Philip Thomas, Elissa Poole and Elinor Frey. Many of her compositions were supported by commissions through the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council and the Laidlaw Foundation. In 2005

her work *Garland* (for Tafelmusik) was awarded Canada's prestigious Jules Léger Prize. Recently several solo discs of her music have been released: *Thought and Desire*, with Eve Egoyan, and *Dirt Road and Drifter* on the label Another Timbre. A new cd will be released by Another Timbre in spring 2018. She has taught composition privately and at Wilfrid Laurier University (1999-present). [www.catlinsmith.com](http://www.catlinsmith.com)

*Path of Uneven Stones* was commissioned by the Société de Musique Contemporaine de Québec (SMCQ) through the Canada Council for the Arts. Central to the work is the piano, which is soloistic, yet non-heroic - a kind of anti-concerto. Throughout the work there are moments where I was trying to create a thicker texture than often found in my work, though at other moments the work thins to almost nothing. The work explores melodic line, (sometimes several lines in layers), which have a slightly uneven rhythmic nature, a path where the stones are unevenly spaced perhaps, though there are places where evenness is paramount.

— Linda Catlin Smith

Pianist **Eve Egoyan** writes: Since the beginning of my career as an interpreter of new music I have been compelled and intrigued by Linda Catlin Smith's sound world, fascinated by the unusual elegance of her writing and her deep intuitive connection with the piano. In 1994, I commissioned Linda's *A Nocturne* (my first Canada Council commission) and included this work on my first solo album, *thethingsinbetween*, 1999. The Globe and Mail selected this disc as one of the top ten discs (all genres) of 1999. I have also performed and recorded *Ballad* (2006), Linda's work for cello and piano as well as the solo piano disc *Thought and Desire*, my most recent disc featuring works by Linda. *Thought and Desire* has garnered a broad range of critical acclaimed internationally and was featured on columnist Alex Ross' "Nighafternight playlist". This autumn I have performed solo concerts at Transart, Italy; Unerhörte Musik, Germany; Klangspuren, Austria; Schloss Elmau, Germany; and ISCM, Vancouver. I have just returned from the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, U.K, where I was invited to perform a solo piano recital of works by Linda, a featured composer at the festival. Upcoming in Toronto, I will be releasing my twelfth solo disc, music by Maria de Alvear, at the Music Gallery this coming April. I am currently developing a multimedia project, *EarWitness*, for which I received New Chapters funding from the Canada Council for the Arts. *EarWitness* will be premiered in Toronto this coming June.

**Robin de Raaff** (Netherlands b.1968)

*Percussion Concerto* (2013)

**Robin de Raaff** (Breda, Netherlands b.1968) discovered his own diverse musical world through playing classical piano as well as bass guitar from a very early age. After being introduced to the legend and legacy of Jaco Pastorius, de Raaff's musical world expanded explosively as an instrumentalist. Parallel with this early development, de Raaff also created his own music and lyrics for his band where instrumental sections grew in

significance, ultimately into completely scored instrumental works. These instrumental compositions led him to enroll as a student of composition. He first studied composition with Geert van Keulen at the Amsterdam Conservatory and later with Theo Loevendie, graduating cum laude in 1997. In 1999 de Raaff had the special privilege of being invited to work as George Benjamin's only composition student at the Royal College of Music in London where he also studied with Julian Anderson.

In 2000 de Raaff was invited to the renowned Tanglewood Music Center as the 'Senior Composition Fellow' which was the beginning of an ongoing relationship resulting in a series of commissions (Piano Concerto for the Festival of Contemporary Music and *Entangled Tales* for the Boston Symphony Orchestra) and performances of his septet *Ennea's Domein* and *Un Visage d'Emprunt*. Four CD's of de Raaff's music were issued in 2017, most recently with Jaap van Zweden conducting his Violin Concerto No. 1 "Angelic echoes" which was selected as the Best Orchestral Work of the year 2008 in the Dutch composition competition Toonzetters, and his Symphony No. 1 "Tanglewood Tales". For 17 years de Raaff has been professor of Composition and Instrumentation at the Composition Department at Codarts (former Rotterdam Conservatory of Music). [www.robinderaraaff.com](http://www.robinderaraaff.com)

The Percussion Concerto was partly written during a stay at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada in June 2013. It was commissioned by the American New Julliard Ensemble (NJE) and the Dutch ensemble Insomnio. The NJE gave the world premiere of the Percussion Concerto on 1 April 2014 in the Lincoln Centre in New York, conducted by Joel Sachs and with Sae Hashimoto as soloist. Ten days later the first Dutch performance was given by Insomnio, with conductor Ulrich Pohl and percussionist Diego Espinosa. The ensemble, comprising 15 players, strives for maximal differentiation of sounds: single strings, harp and piano, an extensive percussion section, horn, trumpet, trombone, flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon alternate with piccolo and alto flute, alto oboe, bass clarinet, contra-bassoon vibraphone and gran cassa, amongst others. The register effects in the score are already anchored in the instrumentation itself. The soloist has a complete arsenal - bongos, a marimba, temple blocks, tomtoms and vibraslaps, amongst others. The ensemble percussionist has, amongst others, a glockenspiel and a vibraphone. In the first movement, the marimba is the central nervous system of the body of sound, the motor of the ensemble. A distinctive feature of the solo part are the upward gestures, involving ever wider intervals, that culminate in de Raaff's characteristic trills that multiply in the strings, harp and piano. The dramaturgy of the piece is created by strategic contrasts of texture between movements: the marimba dominates the first movement, the bongos, tomtoms, big bass drum and vibraphone the second, and the solo cadenza for marimba, the third. The intertwining of the instruments goes

so far that sounds seem to grow together, for example where the brass and wind stir up the vibraphone, where the soloist and the piano melt into one percussion part, or where the trumpet triggers a rapid descent in the tutti by means of rising and falling glissandi: the brass, low winds and white keys of the piano sink to the bottom in a crescendo glissando, while the high winds, harp, violins and violas climb upwards. The result is a cavernous effect, a counterpoint of registers, that gives the music a physiological dimension, and sets the percussion in the middle as protagonist, driver, seeker of both unity and conflict. The long solo cadenza with its particular performance instruction - 'like a hum' for the marimba - prepares the way for the dynamic finale, in which repeated pulse tones and tremolos underline the 'physical' character of the percussion's music. — *Bas van Putten*

Leading Canadian percussionist Dr. **Ryan Scott** has been hailed as “Fierce and delicate...a chameleon-like virtuoso who triumphs over the varied colouristic demands and technical challenges” (Gramophone). As a marimba and multi-percussion soloist he has performed extensively in contemporary music festivals in Europe, Japan, China, Indonesia, South Africa, the UK and The Netherlands. He has also performed as guest soloist with Esprit Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Hyogo Performing Arts Centre Orchestra, the Austin Symphony and numerous other orchestras and chamber ensembles across North America. Ryan is a stalwart figure in the Toronto contemporary music community and has performed in over 300 world premieres. In addition to his work as a regular guest artist with NEXUS, Principal Percussionist of Esprit Orchestra and percussionist in the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra since 1996, he is also a sought-after chamber musician and teacher. A core member of Continuum Contemporary Music, he also serves the organization as Artistic Director. His live recording of three Maki Ishii percussion concertos with Esprit Orchestra (Innova 809) elevated Ryan to international acclaim in 2011. He studied with Russell Hartenberger and Robin Engelman at the University of Toronto and serves on the faculty at the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. Ryan is married to harpist Sanya Eng, and lives in Toronto with their three children.

Our next event: **Sunday January 14, 2018 @ 8** (Introduction @ 7:15)

**MingHuan Xu** violin **Winston Choi** piano **NMC ensemble** directed by **Robert Aitken**

**Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street**

**Arnold Schoenberg** (Austria/USA 1874-1951) – Phantasy Op.47 (1949)

**Michael Oesterle** (Canada b.1968) – Chamber Concerto (2017)

(World premiere, NMC commission)

**Alban Berg** (Austria 1885-1935) – Chamber Concerto (1923-25)