



21/22
Crossing
Over

New Music Concerts Presents

Aulos

Artistic Director
Brian Current

51st Season
— 413th Event

Nov. 11, 18, and 25, 2021
Broadcast Online from
Koerner Hall

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. Today Toronto is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands. We are grateful to have the opportunity to meet, work, and live on this island.

21/22 Concert Season

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Online Broadcasts - 8pm

Featuring Flautists Robert Aitken and
Dianne Aitken

Taylor Long - Videography
Dennis Patterson - Audio Engineer

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and 25, 2021**

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Program

Broadcast 1 - November 11, 2021 8pm Concert, 7:45 Pre-concert Chat

Shawn E. Okpebholo (USA)

*On a Poem by Miho Nonaka: Harvard
Square for Flute* (2013)

Toru Takemitsu (JPN)

*Masque: Continu & Incidental, Incidental
II for Two Flutes* (1959-1961)

Broadcast 2 - November 18, 2021 8pm Concert, 7:45 Pre-concert Chat

Maurice Ohana (FRA)

Satyres for Two Flutes (1976)

Hilda Paredes (MEX)

Chaczidzib for Piccolo (1992)

Hitomi Kaneko (JPN)

Miyabi for Two Flutes (1991)

Broadcast 3 - November 25, 2021 8pm Concert, No Pre-Concert Chat

Yoshihisa Taira (JPN/FRA)

Maya for Bass Flute (1972)

Thorkell Sigurbjörnsson (ISL)

Kalaís for Flute (1976)

Diego Luzuriaga (ECA)

Paris-Yangana-Paris for Flute (1984) and
*Tierra... for Flute/Piccolo and Flute/Alto
Flute* (1992)



Artist Biographies

Robert Aitken

— Flutes



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 directed from 1971-2021.

Dianne Aitken

— Flutes



Based in Toronto, flutist Dianne Aitken maintains a balance between her professional and family life. Active as a soloist, chamber and session/orchestral player in Canada, Europe, China and the US, Ms. Aitken is also recognized for her teaching, arranging, composing, curating and curriculum development. A Certified Teacher, Ms. Aitken is currently on Flute Faculty at The Royal Conservatory, the RC Band Enrichment Program, Department Coordinator of the Peterson School Woodwind, Brass and Percussion Department, and Senior Examiner/Curriculum Developer (RC Examinations).

Over the past 35+ years, Dianne has been involved in a myriad of musical adventures. From the New York recording of Henry Brant's multiple flute works, to the onstage banda in COC's production of *La Bohème*, outdoor performances in R. Murray Schafer's *The Enchanted Forest*,

Cuban pianist/composer David Virelles' large-scale work *Gnosis*, performing in chamber ensemble under the baton of Pierre Boulez, Artist-in-Residence in Banff, notable contemporary music festivals in Darmstadt (Germany), *Acanthes* (France) and Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music, to visiting artist at the Hong Kong Flute Centre.

Ms. Aitken's performances/broadcasts in Canada, Europe, China and the US include those on CBC, CJRT and CKLN with New Music Concerts, Canadian Opera Company, Esprit Orchestra, *Zelda Symphony of the Goddesses*, *Arraymusic*, soprano Barbara Hannigan, Aitken/Tureski Duo, Quattro Flute Quartet and Robert Aitken.



The Composers And Their Music

Shawn E. Okebhola

— *On a Poem by Miho Nonaka: Harvard Square*



Program Note

This composition — inspired by Harvard Square, a poem by the Japanese poet, Miho Nonaka — is a work for solo flute, composed for and premiered by my friend, Caen Thomason-Redus. It was not my intention to, necessarily, text paint each word of the poem; rather, I tried to evoke the essence of the poem's meaning. In one word, Nonaka describes her poem as being about 'resonance.' A natural term in the music world, the word 'resonance', figuratively speaking, can also mean evoking images, memories and emotions, which she beautifully achieves in Harvard Square. This composition is for the virtuoso flutist, utilizing various extended flute techniques. For example, the composition begins with the flute playing bamboo tones, a way for the modern western flute to, by using nontraditional fingerings (which I notated in the score), sound like a shakuhachi flute, a Japanese bamboo flute.

— Shawn E. Okebhola

Biography

A widely sought-after and award-winning composer, Shawn E. Okebhola has been described by Augusta Read Thomas as "...a beautiful artist ...who has enormous grace in his music, and fantasy and color." Okebhola comfortably composes in various styles and genres, intentional in creating music that is diverse, dynamic, and genuine. His artistry has resulted in many prizes and honors, including The American Academy of Arts and Letters Walter Hinrichsen Award in Music, First Place Winner of the 2020 American Prize in Composition (professional/wind band division) and Second Place Winner in the 2017 American Prize in Composition (professional/orchestral division), First Prize Winner in the Flute New Music Consortium Composition Competition, Sound of Late Composition Contest, Accent06 International Composition Competition, and the Inaugural Awardee of the Leslie Adams-Robert Owens Composition Award.

Okebhola maintains a dynamic career as a

Shawn E. Okebholo Continued

composer, including performances on five continents, over forty states, almost every major U.S. city, at some of the nation's most prestigious performance spaces, including Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, and the National Cathedral. He was awarded a two-year residency with the

Chicago Opera Theater (2021-2023 seasons) and has had performances by many celebrated artists and ensembles, including The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; Fifth House Ensemble; Ensemble Dal Niente's Tara Lynn Ramsey and Kyle Flens; United States Army Field

Toru Takemitsu — *Masque: Continu & Incidental, Incidental II*



Program Note

Awarded the French Ambassador's Prize, the title of Takemitsu's *Masque* is a transliteration of the English title, 'Mask.' The compositional style is derived from the flute parts of Japanese Noh theatre. Both flutists must shout Noh interjections, such as "Y-o-o-o!" in addition to playing their instruments. The two flutes weave continuously, changing linear patterns, and interpenetrating each other in tempo. The premiere took place at the Third Karuizawa

Contemporary Music Festival of the Institute for Twentieth Century in 1959.

Biography

Toru Takemitsu was a self-taught Japanese composer who combined elements of Eastern and Western music and philosophy to create a unique sound world. Some of his early influences were the sonorities of Debussy, and Messiaen's use of nature imagery and modal scales. There is a certain influence of Webern in Takemitsu's use

Toru Takemitsu Continued

of silence, and Cage in his compositional philosophy, but his overall style is uniquely his own. Takemitsu believed in music as a means of ordering or contextualizing everyday sound in order to make it meaningful or comprehensible. His philosophy of "sound as life" lay behind his incorporation of natural sounds, as well as his desire to juxtapose and reconcile opposing elements such as Orient and Occident, sound and silence, and tradition and innovation. From the beginning, Takemitsu wrote highly experimental music involving

improvisation, graphic notation, unusual combinations of instruments and recorded sounds. The result is music of great beauty and originality. It is usually slowly paced and quiet, but also capable of great intensity. The variety, quantity and consistency of Takemitsu's output are remarkable considering that he never worked within any kind of conventional framework or genre. In addition to the several hundred independent works of music, he scored over ninety films and published twenty books.

Maurice Ohana — *Satyres*



Program Note

In the continuation of Ohana's *Improvisations* for solo flute of 1961, *Satyres* continues the exploration of the sound resources of the flute, this time married to itself in an alternately free and determined counterpoint, where we find the essential figures of the enriched monodic neumes and the contribution of multiple sounds. The two flutes,

sometimes mixed, sometimes autonomous, are put into an acoustic relationship where a certain degree of freedom is left to the immediate reaction of the performers as they react to each other's musical phrasing.

- Christine Prost

Maurice Ohana Continued

Biography

A composer of striking originality, given to rejecting schools, clichés, and fashions, Maurice Ohana pursued a distinguished career that is as hard to characterize as his nationality. His father had Andalusian heritage, but as the family had settled in Gibraltar, had British citizenship.

Maurice was born in Morocco and brought up in Bayonne, France. He studied in Paris and Barcelona, joined the British Army in World War II and fought in Italy, staying behind to study composition with Casella. In 1947 he returned to Paris and founded a group called "Zodiaque," devoted to the ideal of artistic freedom, mainly freedom to reject the twelve-tone system that was then rapidly taking over European musical thought. His manifesto attacked serialism, "Parisian clichés," and avant-garde techniques. This made him a lifelong foe of the Pierre Boulez, the avant-garde serialist who led the dominant Parisian clique from that time and for the next half-century.

Ohana's music escapes the older Romantic tonal tradition by embracing the wildness and strange scales of Andalusian and Northern African music. His music calls for fluid, florid, almost bel canto singing and remarkably subtle new tone colorations (instrumental and vocal). He often seeks the stillness of Eastern-inspired meditation, but often uses hard-edged, Stravinskian rhythms. His music often has a sense of half-forgotten, archaic rituals. He used electronic music on occasion, and divided the octave into intervals smaller than the usual half-step.

Hilda Paredes

— *Chaczidzib*



Program Note

The title of the piece is the name of a red chested bird in Mexico and it is taken from an ancient Mayan prophecy:

In ancient Mayan legend, the bird Ek Buc, a bird dressed in black and the Chaczidzib, a bird dressed in red (where the former representing the conqueror and the latter the Indian) had an encounter that refers to a war which would be held. The black bird would be wounded and blood would be shed. The idea of blood prevails in the prophecy and its symbol is the red bird. The Ek Buc would go towards the sea, while the red bird would sing farwell. This is the expression of hope that one day this disgraceful age would come to an end.

– Hilda Paredes

Biography

Firmly established as one of the leading Mexican composers of her generation, Hilda Paredes has been based in London for 35 years. Musicians, singers and conductors frequently praise the perfect balance she achieves between brilliant compositional technique and a keen sensibility for the

particular instruments and individuals for whom she writes.

While there is a testimony of constant collaboration with Mexican poets and artists in her works, she also draws inspiration from music and cultures from around the world. Her music has been acclaimed by the critics for the refinement of her craft, marked by the intensity of the relationship between time, dramatic force and poetic approach. The versatility of her work is manifest in a catalogue that includes a wide range of electroacoustic works created at IRCAM, at SWR Experimentalstudio and at CIRM, where the electronics of her widely celebrated opera *Harriet*, *Scenes in the life of Harriet Tubman*, were created. After the premiere at the Muziekgebouw Amsterdam, the Dutch critic, Joep Stapel, placed *Harriet* as the number one Best Classical Music of 2018. In 2019, Hilda was awarded a prestigious Ivors Composer Award for this work.

Paredes continues to be involved in the musical life of her native Mexico as a composer and teacher and was also radio producer of new music.

Hitomi Kaneko

— *Miyabi*



Program Note

Miyabi for two flutes was written in 1991 when the composer was living in Paris and the piece is dedicated to flautist Pierre-Yves Artaud. The composer intended to write a virtuosic work that challenges the technical limitations of the flute. *Miyabi* is the work of a finely talented and sensitive composer. An innovative use is made of the technical resources of the instrument, allowing a skilful integration of breathing techniques, micro-intervals, tongue-rams, and whistle tones all combining into a poetic and virtuosic musical discourse.

- Pierre-Yves Artaud

Biography

Born in Japan in 1965, Ms. Kaneko graduated from the composition class at Toho Gakuen School of Music in 1988, and completed postgraduate studies in 1994. She went to study in France with a French Government scholarship in 1990. She then began to study at the Paris Conservatoire. She also attended the Summer Music Festivals in Avignon and Darmstadt with scholarships in 1992. In September 1997, she went to Paris to study at IRCAM. At present, she is a full-time professor of Toho Gakuen School of Music.

Yoshihisa Taira

— *Maya*



Program Note

Maya was composed in Rennes in 1971 in five days while Taira also finished the composition of *Stratus* (for flute and harp). In both works, the use of the bass flute is a direct reference to the Japanese shakuhachi - in the "impurity" of sound, and in the violence of its explosions - but is also inspired by the gestures and philosophy of martial arts movement in time. Of the three parts that make up the work, the first and the last are based on a violent alternation between the cry and choppy interjections of the wind sounds. Conversely, the central part, more meditative, uses the voice as an extension of the sounds played as a means of additional resonance. The resonant poetry of the how Taira uses the bass flute, and the careful use of multiphonics, makes *Maya* one of its author's most successful flute pieces.

- Emmanuel Hondré

Biography

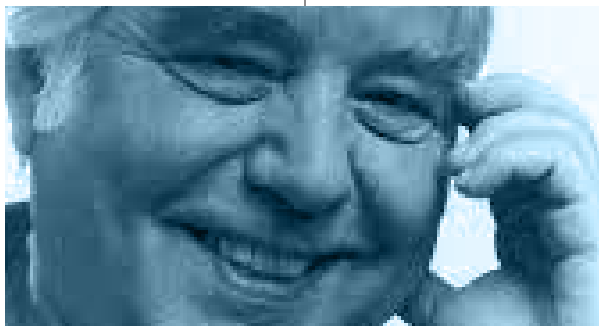
Yoshihisa Taira was born in Tokyo in 1937. Born into a family of means, he grew up in a

world imbued with western music: Mozart, Chopin (played by his sister on the piano), but also jazz, performed by his father. At the age of 16 he was overwhelmed by listening to *La Cathédrale engloutie* by Claude Debussy. In this way was born his fascination for this composer, and, more generally, for French music with the discovery notably of Ravel and Honegger. He also listened to Stravinsky, Schönberg and Webern so as to familiarise himself with more recent composing techniques, although the dodecaphonic approach in no way suited him as he preferred freedom, feeling himself to be in sympathy with French musical art. From this time on he perfected his knowledge of French culture, not only in music but also in painting and literature (Hugo, Rimbaud, Verlaine) and continually came to France to study. This desire was reinforced by his encounter with the music of André Jolivet and Olivier Messiaen. After studying first the piano, then harmony and counterpoint and composition at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music with Ikenouchi Tomojiro, he won a bursary from the French government, arriving in

Yoshisa Taira Continued

Paris in 1966. That same year he entered the Paris Conservatory in the class of André Jolivet, who detected exceptional talent in him. He also worked with Henri Dutilleux and attended Olivier Messiaen's analysis classes. While still a student he received commissions and had a series of first performances; he settled in France and only returned on rare occasions to Japan.

Thorkell Sigurbjörnsson — *Kalais*



Program Note

Kalais is the son of Borea the North Wind. On an old map of Iceland he is depicted as a lute player enticing fish and monsters out of the sea. Surely this is wrong; the son of the North Wind would have been a wind player.

— *Thorkell Sigurbjörnsson*

Biography

Icelandic composer Thorkell Sigurbjörnsson began his music studies with violin and piano at the Reykjavik School of Music, with further studies in the United States. Sigurbjörnsson received his Bachelor of Arts degree at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, followed by a Masters' Degree from the University of Illinois. Since 1962 Sigurbjörnsson has taught at the Reykjavik

Thorkell Sigurbjörnsson Continued

College of Music and at the Icelandic Academy of Arts. He served for over thirty years as moderator of New Music with the Iceland National Radio. As one of the most important composers of contemporary music in Northern Europe, Sigurbjörnsson worked tirelessly to promote new music and has influenced a new generation of composers and artists. His oeuvre ranges from simple childrens' pieces to large orchestral works. He was a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music and earned a Doctor of Fine Arts from Hamline University.

Diego Luzuriaga

— *Paris-Yangana-Paris* and *Tierra... tierra...*



Program Notes

Paris-Yangana-Paris

In 1983 I left Quito to study music composition in Paris. During the first year in Paris - my first ever away from Ecuador - I heard and saw everything I could of the European "Avant-Garde" scene. This short piece - written in 1984 - was my attempt to fuse both this contemporary scene and sounds reminiscent of the fantastic childhood years I spent in Yangana - a small village and a farm in the south of Ecuador.

- Diego Luzuriaga

Tierra...tierra

The earthy, primordial sound of flutes fascinated me since I was a child in a small town in Ecuador. This flute duet aspires to be a sort of meditation about the link between man (the eternal Man) and Earth through the primordial sound of these musical instruments. 'Tierra...Tierra..' was dedicated to and premiered by Aurele Nicolet and Robert

Aitken in Toronto in December 1992.

- Diego Luzuriaga

Biography

Ecuadorian composer Diego Luzuriaga is a unique voice in Latin American composition. The strength of his music comes from its Andean rhythms and colours, its subtle avant-garde echoes, and its open Latin American lyricism. Recently, his output has been primarily for voice – cantatas, opera, songs (many popular, others on the cusp between popular and art song). Being both composer and poet, he creates vocal works that have intensity, fluidity, and durability. Luzuriaga has also published poetry and a book of short stories. He holds a Doctorate from Columbia University.

He has received commissions from the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Ensemble InterContemporain and the Ensemble Itinéraire of Paris, the Ensemble Pro Musica Nipponia and the Nishikawa Ensemble of Japan, the Nieuw Ensemble

Diego Luzuriaga Continued

the Ensemble Aventure of Freiburg, the Symphony Orchestra of Ecuador, the Loja Symphony Orchestra, the Robert Aitken and Aurèle Nicolet flute duo, Cuarteto Latinoamericano, Vocalessence of Minneapolis, Teatro Nacional Sucre of Ecuador, and the Quintet of the Americas, of New York.

He has taught musical composition at the Federal University of Brasilia. He is the recipient of several international awards, including, in 1993, the Guggenheim Fellowship. His opera *Manuela y Bolívar*, the first Ecuadorian opera ever performed, was a national event and received critical acclaim when it premiered in Quito in November 2006. The same year, Ecuadorian president Alfredo Palacio presented Luzuriaga with the Eugenio Espejo Prize, the highest recognition to an Ecuadorian artist. His stage cantata, *El Niño de los Andes*, commissioned by VocalEssence of Minneapolis, premiered in that city in December 2008.

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