

*New Music Concerts presents*

**the music of györgy kurtág**

Saturday April 13, 2002  
Glenn Gould Studio  
Canadian Broadcasting Centre

*New Music Concerts*

157 Carlton • Suite 203 • Toronto m5a 2k3

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*New Music Concerts*

Robert Aitken, artistic director

**2001 – 2002 season**

*New Music Concerts presents*

# **the music of györgy kurtág**

**Saturday April 13, 2002**  
Glenn Gould Studio, Canadian Broadcasting Centre

*31<sup>st</sup> season • 256<sup>th</sup> event*

**Illuminating Introduction @ 7:15**  
with **Dr. Julia Galieva-Szokolay**

**Julia Galieva-Szokolay**, Russian-born musicologist and teacher, obtained her Doctoral Degree in Moscow. She has been a faculty member of the Tchaikovsky Conservatory. Specializing in twentieth century music, Mrs. Galieva-Szokolay participated in ethnographic fieldwork, journal editing and broadcasting. Since 1996 Mrs. Galieva-Szokolay lives and teaches in Toronto.

Concert @ 8:00 pm

*Programme:*

**Woodwind Quintet Op.2 (1959)** dur. 7'  
**Robert Aitken**, flute, **Keith Atkinson**, oboe, **Max Christie**, clarinet,  
**Fred Rizner**, horn, **Kathleen McLean**, bassoon

**Bagatelles Op.14d (1981)** dur. 10'  
**Robert Aitken**, flute, **Peter Pavlovsky**, contrabass,  
**David Swan**, piano

**Scenes from a Novel Op.19 (1979-82)** dur. 20'  
**Ingrid Attrot**, soprano, **Richard Moore**, cimbalom,  
**Fujiko Imajishi**, violin, **Peter Pavlovsky**, contrabass

— *intermission* —

*Canadian Music Centre presentation of the Toronto  
Emerging Composer's Award to **Rose Bolton***

*Hommage à R. Sch.* Op. 15d (1990) dur. 10'

Max Christie, clarinet, Douglas Perry, viola, David Swan, piano

*Officium breve In Memoriam Andreae Szervanszky*

Op.28 (1988-1989) dur. 12'

Accorded string quartet: Fujiko Imajishi & Carol Fujino, violins,  
Douglas Perry, viola, David Hetherington, cello

*Four Capriccios* Op.9 (1959/70, rev.1993) dur. 9'

(North American Premiere)

Ingrid Attrot, soprano, Douglas Stewart, flute, Keith Atkinson,  
oboe, Max Christie, clarinet, Kathleen McLean, bassoon, Fred  
Rizner, horn, Trevor Tureski, percussion, Richard Moore,  
cimbalom, Erica Goodman, harp, David Swan, piano/celeste,  
Fujiko Imajishi & Carol Fujino, violins, Douglas Perry, viola,  
David Hetherington, cello, Peter Pavlovsky, contrabass,  
Robert Aitken, conductor

Tonight's performance is being recorded for future broadcast  
on **TWO NEW HOURS** on CBC Radio Two

Ingrid Attrot's participation in this evening's performance was  
made possible by the generous support of **Roger D. Moore**



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**György Kurtág** was born on 19th February 1926 at Lugos in the Bánát, an area which had been ceded to Rumania after World War I. From 1940, Kurtág took piano lessons from Magda Kardos and composition with Max Eisikovits at Timisoara. Early in September 1945, he made his way to Budapest in the hope of being admitted to the class of Béla Bartók at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music. News of Bartók's death in America was a great shock both to Kurtág and his fellow student György Ligeti.



At the Budapest Academy, Kurtág studied the piano with Pál Kadosa, composition with Sándor Veress and Ferenc Farkas and chamber music with Leó Weiner. He became a Hungarian citizen in 1948. He graduated in piano and chamber music in 1951, obtaining his degree in composition in 1955.

1957/58 proved a significant year in Kurtág's life, working in Paris with the Hungarian psychologist Marianne Stein and attending the courses of Olivier Messiaen and Darius Milhaud. His encounter with the music of Anton Webern (several of whose scores he copied out for himself by hand), the plays of Samuel Beckett, French architecture (e.g. Chartres Cathedral) and nature all combined to generate a profound change in his musical thinking. The first tangible result of this process was the String Quartet Op. 1 composed after his return to Budapest. After a brief but equally decisive visit to Stockhausen, Kurtág returned to Hungary in 1958, where he was the first composer to establish a successful personal style after the restrictions of the Stalinist era.

Kurtág's reputation as an instrumental and vocal coach preceded his success as a composer at home and abroad. Between 1960 and 1968, he worked as *répétiteur* for the National Philharmonia; in 1967, he was appointed Professor of piano, subsequently also of chamber music, at the Budapest Academy, retiring in 1986. In 1971, Kurtág spent a year in Berlin on a DAAD scholarship. In 1987, he was elected Member of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts as well as of the Berlin Academy of Arts. He received the prestigious Ernst von Siemens Prize in 1988.

Prior to his Opus 33, *Stele*, written for Claudio Abbado and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, during his two-year composer-in-residency (1993-1995), Kurtág had composed — apart from choruses — chamber music exclusively, from solo pieces to works for chamber ensemble, growing in size and sophistication.

His international reputation was established by *Messages of the Late Miss R. V. Trousova*, Op. 17 for soprano and chamber ensemble (world premiere in Paris on 14 January 1981). This 21-movement work, performed by the Ensemble InterContemporain led by Pierre Boulez, placed Kurtág as one of the most exciting names on the international scene. ...*quasi una fantasia...* Op. 27 No. 1 for piano and instrumental groups, composed for a series of concerts dedicated to him by the Berlin Festival in October 1988, was the first work where he realised his long-standing idea of spatial music, where the public is enveloped by sound coming from various points in the concert hall. Several pieces followed which were based on the same idea, using instruments as their protagonists, rather than the human voice which until then had played a central role in his oeuvre.

Kurtág officially retired from the Liszt Academy in 1986, teaching only a limited number of classes there until leaving Hungary in 1993. Since 1993 he has lived in Berlin (in residence with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, 1993–5, and as a member of the Akademie der Künste, 1998–9), Vienna (as composer-in-residence at the Wiener Konzerthaus, 1995–6), Amsterdam (as honorary professor at the Royal Conservatory of the Hague, 1996–7) and Paris, working in collaboration with the Ensemble InterContemporain and at the Conservatoire (1999–). A major retrospective festival of his music is planned for April 20th at the South Bank Centre in London.

*Every composition has its own rules aside from what the composer wants. The more precisely I knew what I was going to write, the less the piece wanted to go. The child decides when it wants to be born, not its mother.*

— György Kurtág

### Woodwind Quintet Op. 2 (1959)

Composed in 1959, the wind quintet represents the second phase in the process started in Kurtág's compositional activity by the String Quartet. Kurtág's sessions with Marianne Stein led him to radically re-evaluate his oeuvre. She assigned him the simplest of musical tasks, such as exploring the various ways of connecting two notes. Kurtág fathomed the creative impasse he underwent at this time by 'composing' with matches, forming signs and symbolic worlds which would have fanciful titles such as *The*

*Cockroach Seeks its Way to Light*. The last inventions actually formed the basis of his Op. 1 *String Quartet*. The new artistic orientation that resulted from that re-evaluation demanded and made possible the development of a more precise, unequivocal compositional technique.

The *Wind Quintet* is written for the traditional instruments of the genre, but the material given the instruments to play involves new means of expression and imposes very exacting performance techniques. The *Quintet* is in eight brief movements. It is not a series of bagatelles, however, but an uninterrupted arch. The microforms are highly articulated in themselves, the motifs, often consisting of merely a few notes, assume significance through their gestural power and their emotional content.

*I understand music only when I teach. Even if I listen to it or play it myself, it's not the same as working on it and trying to understand it for others. I just love music.*

— György Kurtág

### Bagatelles Op. 14d (1981) flute, double bass, piano

Composed in 1981 for and dedicated to the British flutist Michelle Lee, *Bagatelles* is a transcription of pieces in Books 4 and 5 of *Játékok* (Games) and of *Herdecker Eurythmiae*, Op. 14. Its ancestor, *Játékok*, was originally the result of an invitation from the piano teacher Marianne Teke to contribute some pieces to an album of works for children in 1973 and has subsequently evolved into an open-ended work, a sort of mother ship from which several satellite works such as the *Bagatelles* have issued forth.

Six movements form the basis of the piece: *Furious Chorale*, *Hommage à J.S.B.*, *Like the flowers of the field* (*Dirge in memoriam Ligeti Ilona*), *Wild and Tame*, *Flowers we are, mere flowers* and *The Crazy Girl with the Flaxen Hair*.

*I keep coming back to the realisation that one note is almost enough. One can make music out of almost nothing.*

— György Kurtág

**Scenes from a Novel** Op. 19 (1979–1982)

15 songs to poems by Rimma Dalos  
soprano, cimbalom, violin, double bass

The title is a reference to Ingmar Bergmann's well-known film, *Scenes from a Marriage*. The piece is related to *Messages of the late Miss R. V. Trousova* in that both pieces have been inspired by the poetry of Rimma Dalos, the obscure Russian poetess living in Budapest; also, in both instances, it was Kurtág who arranged in a sequence poems originally completely independent from one another, based on links of content and atmosphere he discerned in them. In neither works did he initially have any particular plan in mind. Only after a number of poems had been set to music did he realise the possibility of forming a cycle out of them. Some of the fifteen poems of *Scenes from a Novel* were first intended to be part of *Messages* (such as Rondo). Further traits in common include the use of the Russian language and the identity of the dedicatee: the soprano Adrienne Csengery, for whom Kurtág has composed several other works.

Fluent in Romanian, Hungarian, German, French and English, Kurtág learned Russian out of a desire to read Dostoevsky in the original. He draws on language to set the texts of a range of great poets including Blok, Sappho, Hölderlin and, most characteristically, Kafka. This is one of five works from this period to Russian texts. As Rachel Beckles Willson has observed, the composer's fascination with the Russian language "became sacred for him in the way that Latin was for Stravinsky, and it led to a burst of creativity."

As in some of his other compositions, there are tributes to other composers — Gustav Mahler, Alfred Schnittke and László Kalmár. These were included as subtitles as an after-thought if the setting of a poem reminded Kurtág of the idiom of another composer.

**Scenes from a Novel**

15 poems by Rimma Dalos

**1. Come**

Come.  
here's my hand  
with my warmth  
I melt your frost.  
Too long I've kept  
in my soul's depths  
these useless cents.

**2. From Meeting to Parting** (a desperate lament)

From meeting  
to parting,  
from leave-taking  
to awaiting  
— that was my woman's lot.

**3. Supplication**

Merciful ones, forgive me  
this woman's weakness,  
that I so loved  
this holy fool.

**4. Allow Me**

Allow me  
to touch you:  
to melt, to dissolve in you

**5. Counting-out Rhyme**

Here and there I picked and chose  
till all my chances slipped away  
and I was left here with this love  
so ragged and tattered, torn and frayed.

**6. Dream**

Every night the same dream:  
I beg you to come near,  
You approach —  
I push you away.

**7. Rondo**

I said: it cannot be,  
I said: it will pass,

I said, I said...  
Beyond the mist of days  
the purple dawn cannot be seen,  
nor can the pain of parting  
beyond the moment's bliss.

Bliss we had,  
a parting too.  
I said: it cannot be,  
I said: it will pass,  
I said, I said...

### 8. Nakedness

I cover my soul  
with a fig leaf  
and flee paradise.

### 9. Hurdy-Gurdy Waltz

Even in the rush-hour  
the tramcar of my soul  
cheerfully rolls along.

### 10. Tale

I wanted you to see me  
like some goddess in the glory  
of the starry sky:  
but then I opened the door  
all ragged, a broom in my  
dirty hand.

### 11. Again

I'm waiting for you again.  
How slowly comes  
tomorrow.

### 12. Sundays (Perpetuum mobile)

That's another  
Sunday over.  
That means  
The next will come.

### 13. Visit

In a cold blanket of snow  
a visitor called:  
sorrow.

### 14. True Story

The love  
conceived  
amid  
the haste  
of spring  
is dying.  
But in your garden  
grows  
the grass  
of oblivion.

### EPILOGUE (a dispirited wail)

From meeting  
to parting,  
from leave-taking  
to awaiting  
– that was my woman's lot.

Rimma Dalos

Translated by Peter Sherwood.

### Hommage à R. Sch. Op. 15d (1990) clarinet, viola, piano

According to the dates on the score, this work is an assembly of fragments composed and revised at intervals between 1975 and 1990, though the first inklings of the work may be found in the sketches for *Játékok* in 1973. It was first performed at the 1990 Budapest New Music Festival, by an ensemble including the composer's pianist wife Márta.

Anthony Burton has noted that "The 'R. Sch.' of the characteristically enigmatic title is Robert Schumann; and the work, scored for the instruments of Schumann's *Märchenerzählungen* (with one bit of "doubling" at the end) is an act of homage from one great miniaturist to another. There is no direct quotation of themes by Schumann, and there are only occasional references to the gestures or textures of his music. But the titles of the individual movements show a preoccupation with the world which Schumann created in his musical and literary output."

The movements are as follows:

1. merkwürdige Pirouetten des Kappelmeisters Johannes Kreisler [The marvelous pirouettes of Kappelmeister Kreisler]
2. E. [Eusebius]: der begrenzte Kreis... [Eusebius: the limiting circle]
3. ...und wieder zuckt es schmerzlich F. [Florestan] um die Lippen... [and again Florestan is painfully struck on the lips]
4. Felho valék, már süt a nap... [I was a cloud, and now I become the sun]
5. In der Nacht [In the Night]
6. Abschied (Meister Raro entdeckt Guillaume de Machaut ) [Farewell — Meister Raro discovers Guillaume de Machaut]

**Officium breve In Memoriam Andreæ Szervanszky Op. 28**  
(1988–1989) for string quartet

*Officium Breve* was composed in 1988/89 in honour of Dr Wilfried Brennecke, who served as Director of the Witten Festival (Germany) and Producer of Contemporary Chamber Music in Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR), Cologne. The world premiere took place on 22 April, 1989 at the Witten Festival, performed by the Auryn quartet.

The composer had set himself the aim of integrating within a single composition two fundamentally different musical worlds - those of Anton Webern and the Hungarian composer Andreæ Szervánszky (1911–77). Szervánszky had been rather late in discovering for himself the music of Webern but in the last twenty years of his life it was to be his basic musical experience. That accounts for the fact that this composition, in paying tribute to Szervánszky, is also an homage to Webern.

The individual movements of *Officium breve* are rooted in personal relationships and — through multiple transformations — are eventually joined together in this composition. They are unified by a definite principle.

The two quotations (Webern: *Second Cantata*, Op 31 VI and Szervánszky: *Serenade for Strings*, 3rd movement) occur in the centre and at the conclusion of the string quartet, respectively.

**Four Capriccios Op. 9** (1970-1971, rev.1997)  
soprano, flute (piccolo), oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, percussion, cimbalom, harp, piano (celeste), 2 violins, viola, cello, bass

The *Capriccios* for soprano and chamber orchestra are dedicated to his colleague András Mihály (as is his op. 13) and are settings of Hungarian poems by István Bálint. The work was first conducted by Mihály in Budapest in 1971 and is contemporaneous with Kurtág's year of study in West Berlin with the support of the Deutscher akademischer Austauschdienst. The four movements are entitled *Paris I, Museum of Cluny: The Lady with the Unicorn* (a reference to the Renaissance tapestry in the Cluny Museum showing Queen Mary of England with the mythological beast); *Paris II: The Tower of St. Jacques* (again, a reference to a visual experience in Paris); *Language Lesson*; and *Ars Poetica*.

**Four Capriccios**  
Poems by Istavan Bálint

### 1. Paris I., Museum of Cluny: The Lady with the Unicorn

Before touching your unicorn  
with your fingers do not forget  
the curtain of the eyes gets soiled, if  
between your legs, anyway  
small animals are watching,  
let's get it over with.

### 2. Paris II., The Tower of St. Jacques

If I could. So unfinished  
  
thorn broken from the sky,  
incomplete male display  
just ran out of

If I could. So un...

### 3. Language Lesson

No matter how the cat  
scratches and screams  
You tear it from the rug  
to throw into the shadow of my open umbrella.

The cat is under the umbrella  
[*A macska az esernyő alatt van.*]

No matter how the umbrella  
screams and scratches the rug  
You tear the cat off  
to throw into its open shadow.

The cat is under the umbrella.

### 4. Ars Poetica

Very superficially,  
just about skin deep  
with things ready to pop out  
naturally

While under  
there is the finest spring  
clockwork of a stinger,  
you see

I lie on you  
rich with wierd analogies  
and wonder, how come,  
despite all this.

Istvan Bálint  
(Translated by the author)

Canadian-born soprano **Ingrid Attrot** has appeared as a soloist with the major British orchestras including the London Symphony Orchestra and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras, and abroad with the Montreal Symphony, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the Aarhus and the Gulbenkian Orchestras. Miss Attrot has sung with several distinguished international conductors including Maestro Dutoit, Sir Neville Mariner, Sir David Willcocks, Trevor Pinnock and Richard Hickox. Her work with the Mr Hickox has included performances of Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes* (Britten), Beethoven's *Fidelio* as 'Leonora', and the soprano soloist in *War Requiem* (Britten).

Principal operatic roles include Miss Jessel, (*Turn of the Screw*) for English National Opera, Donna Anna, (*Don Giovanni*) for Opera Northern Ireland. For the Pacific Opera, Canada, Abigaille (*Nabucco*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), and for Pimlico Opera, the Governess, from Britten's *The Turn of the Screw*.

Ingrid Attrot has a particular affinity for contemporary repertoire which was first recognised when she won the Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition. This was followed up with Miss Attrot being chosen as the major soloist for the Park Lane Group Series in London, UK. Collaborations with significant and renowned British contemporary composers followed, namely Geoffrey Burgeon, Hugh Wood, Nicola LeFanu and Julien Philps. She first performed Kurtág's *Messages of the Late R.V. Troussova* with the French Contemporary Music Ensemble GRAME in 1998 and has recently given further performances of the work in Geneva with Contrechamps conducted by Heinz Holliger. Future engagements include performances in Switzerland of Messiaen's *Harawi* and *Tempo e Tempo* by Elliot Carter in Belgium and France.

### The Toronto Emerging Composer Award

This \$5000 prize is funded by an anonymous donor through the Toronto Community Foundation and administered by the Ontario Region of the Canadian Music Centre. The Toronto Community Foundation's mission is to connect philanthropy to community needs and opportunities. Its vision is to ensure the vitality of Toronto and make it the best place to live, work, learn, and grow through the power of giving. It has been specified that this award can go towards the creation of a new work of art, or possibly to support the completion of an existing creative project. The



anonymous benefactor has stated that the artist will be chosen where... "artistic excellence [is] matched by innovation, experimentation and a willingness to take risks."

The recipient of this award is **Rose Bolton**. Her artistic proposal is to compose and perform an original composition for six performers including an actress or singer. The instrumentation will include amplified found objects, non-western musical instruments, standard western instruments and computers or synthesizers which will be performed live. This is an "epic" piece because of its proposed length of 48 minutes. The composer aims to write music where the listener can become lost in the sounds as if in a mysterious land or new dimension. During the performance, a listener's concentration can come and go, and Rose hopes that this experience will be somewhat meditative. Her goal is to compose a work that transports the listener, or engulfs them in a kind of "soundscape". In this regard, Ms. Bolton plans to concentrate on a creative project of long-standing musical interest. "This award," said Rose Bolton, "will help me to develop creatively by offering me a chance to concentrate fully on artistic work and to gain experience of the technical and business elements of producing a concert with the hope of eventually releasing a recording of the concert on compact disc."

Rose Bolton holds a Master of Music degree in composition from McGill University. She earned her Bachelor of Music at the University of Western Ontario. Ms. Bolton has received several awards for her compositional work, including the H.C. Aitken prize of the 1995 New Music Concerts young composers competition and two prizes in the 1999 SOCAN awards for young composers. She is an Associate Composer of the Canadian Music Centre. Ms. Bolton has been commissioned to write works for a number of performers, including Continuum Contemporary Music, Arraymusic, the Burdocks, the Canadian Electronic Ensemble and accordionist Joseph Petric. She was one of five young composers who participated in the Génération 2000 project directed by conductor Veronique Lacroix which involved six performances by l'Ensemble contemporain de Montréal in a cross-Canada tour. Generation 2000 was presented in Toronto by New Music Concerts as part of the Massey Hall New Music Festival in November 2000. In May 2001 New Music Concerts premiered Bolton's large ensemble work *Incidental Music of My Mind*.

*New Music Concerts presents*  
**Linda Bouchard**  
*a portrait*

Sunday May 26, 2002 – 8:00 • Glenn Gould Studio

**Robert Aitken**, flute  
**New Music Concerts ensemble**  
**Linda Bouchard and Henry Brant**, conductors

Our season concludes with **A Portrait of Linda Bouchard**, the renowned French Canadian composer and conductor. We will present several of her existing pieces and have commissioned a major new work for twelve instruments. Linda's mentor, 88 year old expatriate Canadian and recent Pulitzer Prize winner **Henry Brant**, will also be featured with the world premiere of *Ghosts and Gargoyles*, an NMC-commissioned sequel to his groundbreaking 1931 classic *Angels and Devils* for flute solo with flute orchestra.

*Programme:*

**Le Scandale** (1989) **Linda Bouchard** (b. 1957)  
violin, viola, cello, bass, harp, percussion

**Unity\*\*** (1997) **Akiko Murakami** (b.1968)  
clarinet, cello

**Ghosts and Gargoyles\*** (2002) **Henry Brant** (b.1913)  
solo flute, 8 flutes  
(New Music Concerts commission)

**Traces** (1996) **Linda Bouchard**  
string quartet

**Neiges\*** (2001/2) **Linda Bouchard**  
2 flutes, 2 violins, viola, cello, bass, percussion, harp  
(New Music Concerts / Canada Council commission)

\* World premiere / \*\* Canadian premiere

## *New Music Concerts*

Robert Aitken, c.m., artistic director

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