

New Music Concerts presents

Sofia Gubaidulina: A Portrait


Guest Artists: **Friedrich Lips** bayan
Patricia Green mezzo-soprano | **Michael Schulte** solo violin

Monday November 27, 2006 | Glenn Gould Studio

NM

www.newmusicconcerts.com

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New Music Concerts
Robert Aitken, director

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36th season | 302nd event
Monday November 27, 2006
Glenn Gould Studio
Intro 7:15 | Concert 8:00

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Sofia Gubaidulina: A Portrait

Guest Artists: **Friedrich Lips** bayan
Patricia Green mezzo-soprano | **Michael Schulte** solo violin

Programme:

Sofia Gubaidulina (Russia/Germany 1931) *The Garden of Joys and Sorrows* (1980/93) 15'
Robert Aitken flute | **Steven Dann** viola | **Erica Goodman** harp

Sofia Gubaidulina *In Croce* (1978) 15'
Friedrich Lips bayan | **David Hetherington** cello

Abigail Richardson * (England/Canada 1976) *Upstream* ** (2006) 20'
for violin and string quintet, in three movements | **Michael Schulte** solo violin
Fujiko Imajishi and **Carol Lynn Fujino** violins | **Douglas Perry** viola
David Hetherington cello | **Peter Pavlovsky** bass | **Robert Aitken** director

—Intermission—

Sofia Gubaidulina *Silenzio* (1991) 20'
Friedrich Lips bayan | **Fujiko Imajishi** violin | **David Hetherington** cello

Sofia Gubaidulina *Hommage à T.S. Eliot* (1987/91) 40'
Patricia Green mezzo-soprano
Max Christie clarinet | **Kathleen McLean** bassoon | **Joan Watson** horn
Fujiko Imajishi and **Carol Lynn Fujino** violins | **Douglas Perry** viola
David Hetherington cello | **Peter Pavlovsky** bass | **Robert Aitken** director

* *Canadian work* | ** *World premiere*

Tonight's concert is being recorded for future broadcast on
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Canada's national new music show, with host Larry Lake.

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Robert Aitken, c.m., Artistic Director

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Sofia Asgatovna Gubaidulina was born 24th October 1931 in Chistopol, a small town on the Volga in the Tatar Republic of the USSR. Her father was Tatar, but her mother was Russian and Russian is her native language. When she was small, the family moved to Kazan. She graduated from the Kazan Conservatory in 1954, before transferring to the Moscow Conservatory, where she finished in 1961 as a post-graduate student of Vissarion Shebalin.

In the Soviet period she earned her living writing film scores, while reserving part of every year for her own music. She was early attracted to the modernist enthusiasms of her contemporaries Schnittke and Denisov but emerged with a striking voice of her own with the chamber-orchestral *Concordanza* (1970). During this period she built up a close circle of performing friends with whom she would share long periods of improvisation and acoustic experiment. Out of these experiences came many works, such as the Concerto for bassoon and low instruments (1975, for the bassoonist Valery Popov), *The Hour of the Soul* (1976, rev. 1988, for the percussionist Mark Pekarsky with voice and orchestra) and ground-breaking pieces for the accordionist Friedrich Lips like the frequently played *De Profundis* (1978).

From the late 1970s onwards Gubaidulina's essentially religious temperament became more and more obvious in her work. Already in Soviet times, when the public expression of religious themes was severely repressed, she was writing pieces like the piano concerto, *Intrositus* (1978), the violin concerto for Gidon Kremer, *Offertorium* (1980, rev. 1986), and *Seven Words* for cello, accordion and string orchestra (1982, published in the USSR under the non-religious title 'Partita'). Since the arrival of greater freedom under Gorbachev, religious themes have become her overwhelming preoccupation. Many of her religious works are on a large scale, including a cello concerto inspired by a poem about the Last Judgement (*And: The feast is in full progress*, 1993), *Alleluia* (1990), for chorus and orchestra, a concerto for cello and chorus for Mstislav Rostropovich and, most recently, the colossal *Passion according to St. John* (2000), a German commission to celebrate the Millennium, given its first performance by the soloists, chorus and orchestra of the Kirov Opera conducted by Valery Gergiev.

"I am a religious person...and by 'religion' I mean re-ligio, the re-tying of a bond...restoring the legato of life.

Life divides man into many pieces...There is no weightier occupation than the recomposition of spiritual integrity through the composition of music."



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Much of Gubaidulina's more recent work also reflects her fascination with ancient principles of proportion such as the Golden Section. This is particularly clear in her chamber cantatas, *Perception* (1983) and *Now always snow* (1993) as well as in orchestral pieces like *Stimmen... verstummen...* (1986), *Pro et Contra* (1989) and *Zeitgestalten* (1994), this last being written for Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Gubaidulina has lived in a small village outside Hamburg, Germany, where she delights in the peace and quiet she needs to fulfil the huge number of commissions she has received from all round the world. Reluctant to write or speak about her music, she nonetheless has expressed in few words a powerful credo, provided in the composer catalog prepared by Musikverlag Hans Sikorski, her principal publisher:

To my mind the ideal relationship to tradition and to new compositional techniques is the one in which the artist has mastered both the old and the new, though in a way which makes it seem that he takes note of neither the one nor the other. There are composers who construct their works very consciously; I am one of those who "cultivate" them. And for this reason everything I have assimilated forms as it were the roots of a tree, and the work that grows out of its branches and leaves. One can indeed describe them as being new, but they are leaves nonetheless, and seen in this way they are always traditional or old.

Dmitri Shostakovich and Anton Webern have had the greatest influence on my work. Although my music bears no apparent traces of it, these two composers taught me the most important lesson of all: to be myself.

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The Garden of Joys and Sorrows (1980 rev.1993) for flute, harp and viola

The Garden of Joys and Sorrows (*Garten von Freuden und Traurigkeiten*, 1980) is a one-movement piece for harp, flute and viola. It was conceived under the strong influence of two directly contradictory literary phenomena: 1) the work "Sayat-Nova" by Iv Oganov (Moscow), about the famous Eastern story-teller and singer, and 2) verses by the 20th-Century German poet Francisco Tanzer. Vivid Eastern color was counterposed to a typically Western consciousness. But both of these works had significant inner similarities: their contemplativeness and refinement. Such phrases

in Iv Oganov — "the ordeal of a flower's pain," "...the peal of the singing garden grew...", "...the revelation of the rose...", "...the lotus was set aflame by music" "...the white garden began to ring again with diamond borders..." — impelled me to a concrete aural perception of this garden.

And, on the other hand, all this ecstatic flowering of the garden was expressed naturally in the sum reflections of F. Tanzer about the world and its wholeness. At the basis of the musical rendering of the form of this piece is the opposition of the bright, major coloration of the sphere of natural harmonies against the expression of the intervals of minor second and minor third.

The piece ends with a spoken recitative with these lines from the diary of Francisco Tanzer:

*When is it really over? What is the true ending?
All borders are like a line drawn with a stick of
wood or the beel of a shoe in the sand.
Up to here . . . there's the borderline: All this is
artificial.
Tomorrow we play another game.*

— Sofia Gubaidulina (trans. L. E. Fay)

In Croce (1978)

for bayan and cello

Originally written in 1979 for cello and organ for the Russian cellist Vladimir Toncha, this work also exists in a later version (1991) for cello and bayan (the Russian accordion) by Elsbeth Moser, a version approved by the composer. The work's title means 'On the cross' but refers also to the 'crossing' parts of the two instruments. The cello starts in the low register, gradually ascending, the bayan in the high register, finishing with a very low cluster — in the original version the organ's bellows should be turned off at the very end, creating the remarkable effect of a general physical disintegration of the sound. The cello part is microtonal at the beginning and perfectly diatonic at the end while the bayan part starts in a clear A major and finishes with a kind of indistinct 'whispering'.

Abigail Richardson was born in Oxford, England and moved to Canada as a child. Ironically, she was diagnosed completely and incurably deaf at the age of five. Upon moving to Canada, her hearing was fully intact within months. She received her Bachelor of Music from the University of Calgary and her Masters and Doctorate degrees from the University of Toronto. Her music has been played at the Festival Présences of Paris, Winnipeg New Music Festival, Newfoundland Sound Symposium, Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, Festival of the Sound, etc. Abigail won the first Karen Kieser Prize for Canadian music and the Canadian Music Centre Prairie Region award. Most significantly, she was awarded the top prize for composers under 30 at the prestigious International Rostrum of Composers in Paris. Her music is now being broadcast in 35 countries. She has been commissioned by such groups as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Victoria Symphony, Radio France, Tapestry New Opera, Theatre Direct Canada, Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute, Talisker Players, Festival Winds, etc. Abigail is affiliate composer with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Upstream, my first concerto for my first (and hopefully last) husband, violinist Michael Schulte, may be performed with soloist and string orchestra or string quintet. It represents many driving or reflective tendencies of an individual's existence with many varied switches, often sudden, ranging from serious to outright goofy in one section. Bob Aitken says of it, "It's a *Liebesträume*, you can tell." With this piece I have, for the first time, not followed through on my original concept. I intended for each movement to be built around a different programmatic idea but the piece didn't listen to me. It took on a direction of its own once I started writing. It still has three movements and several themes from the first two movements return in the last. I think of *Upstream* in several different ways: the individual moves against a current, sometimes with the current, sometimes faster. Sometimes the individual (being the violinist, of course) is witnessed from a different perspective, upstream — visible from a distance and getting gradually closer until arriving and suddenly disappearing. The violin actively fuels the current or flows along with it. Michael will be playing the piece again with string orchestra for the Conductor's Guild Conference at Roy Thomson Hall in 2007, and subsequently in Mexico. The piece was sponsored by Arthur Weisz, Cary and Gabriel Jeremias, and New Music Concerts.

— Abigail Richardson

Soloists

Mezzo-soprano **Patricia Green** has gained international renown for her expressive voice, noted for its three-octave ease in diverse repertoire. She sang her acclaimed European debut at the 1997 MUSICA Festival, (Strasbourg, France) in Ligeti's *Requiem* with L'Orchestre de Radio-France and went on to open MUSICA in 2000, performing Dusapin's *La Melancholia*. She sang her debut at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam in 1998 with the Dutch Radio Philharmonic. Ms. Green toured France, England and Canada with Autumnleaf Performance in the opera *Kopernikus* by Claude Vivier. Ms Green has appeared with conductors Leonard Slatkin, Peter Eötvös, Zoltan Pesko, Sir David Willcocks, Reinbert de Leeuw and Gustav Meier. Ms Green has performed extensively at the Kennedy Center with the Theatre Chamber Players and sings chamber music with organizations across Canada and the US. CD recordings are available on Newport Classics, Albany Records, and Live Unity Productions. She is currently Co-ordinator of the Voice Division at the University of Western Ontario's Don Wright Faculty of Music.

Friedrich Lips is one of the most outstanding bayanists of Russia. He was born in 1948 in the Urals in the small mining town of Emanzheminsk of the Chelyabinsk region. He began his music education in the city of Magnitogorsk and later enrolled at the Gnessin Pedagogical Institute of Music in Moscow, entering in 1967 the class of Professor S. Kolobkov. In 1974, he graduated from the post graduate course. In 1971 Lips joined the Gnessin Institute where he has been Professor since 1989. Friedrich Lips has appeared in concert halls for more than twenty years, showcasing his instrument in every large industrial and cultural centre of Russia. His creative collaboration with many composers has resulted in numerous original creations for solo bayan as well as ensemble combinations. Friedrich Lips was the first to perform works dedicated to him by such composers as Eugeny Derbenko, Sofia Gubaidulina and others. Friedrich Lips has been awarded the honorary title of Merited Artist of Russia and is a founding member of the International Accordion Society.

Violinist **Michael Schulte** began serious study in Lübeck, Germany. He performs as soloist at venues such as the Toronto Arts Centre, Glenn Gould Studio, Roy Thomson Hall, at private concert series and music festivals. Aside from solo activities, he is an avid chamber musician on both violin and viola and a regular teacher at the Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute. Michael enjoys performing his wife Abigail Richardson's work and regularly performs, records, or conducts it for national radio broadcast. He held nine concertmasterships in his orchestra days and currently plays with the Turini-Schulte-Bloemendal Trio in addition to a busy teaching schedule. Critic Hugh Fraser comments on "the smooth virtuosity of this elegantly accomplished violinist..."

Rien à voir II

Sat. January 13, 2007
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an evening of electroacoustic magic

**Guest Composers: Robert Normandeau
Gilles Gobeil | John Oliver | Ann Southam**

Programme:

György Ligeti (Hungary/Germany, 1923-2006) – *Artikulation* (1958)

Ann Southam (Canada, 1937) – *Fluke Sound* (1989)

Gilles Gobeil (Canada, 1954) – *Ombres, espaces, silences* (2005)

György Ligeti – *Glissandi* (1957)

John Oliver (Canada, 1959) – *Nylong Symphony* (excerpt, 2005)

Robert Normandeau (Canada, 1955) – *Palimpseste* (2006)

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of music ensembles, concert presenters, and other organizations dedicated to the creation and proliferation of new music in Canada. The Coalition exists to identify and address key issues of the new music community and, through the strength of its member groups, collectively promote new music in Toronto and beyond. The Coalition seeks to achieve this mandate through constant collaboration and a variety of group initiatives including the highly acclaimed 2006 *soundaXis* festival.

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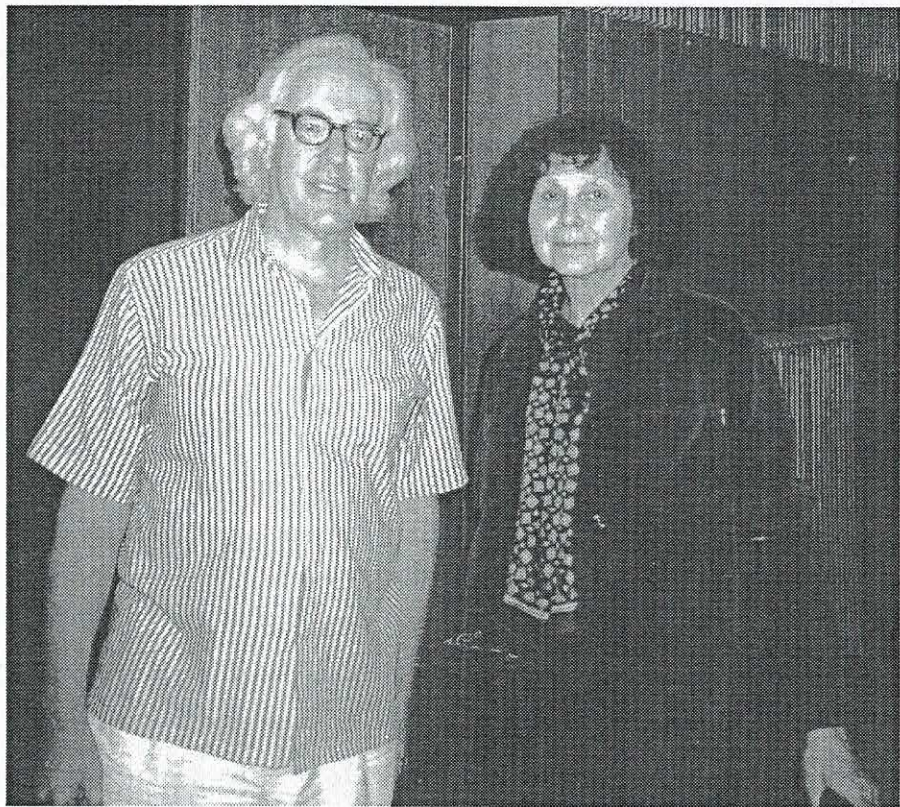
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Robert Aitken with Sofia Gubaidulina in Stuttgart, 1998.