



23/24  
A Season  
of the New

New Music Concerts Presents

# Ligeti @ 100 — *An Evening with the Ligeti Quartet*

Artistic Director  
Brian Current

Director of Operations  
and Communications  
Emily Schimp

53rd Season  
— 427th Event

Thurs, Nov 9th, 2023  
St. George by the Grange  
30 Stephanie St.

### **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 now 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.



## 23/24 Concert Season

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# Ligeti @ 100: *An Evening with the Ligeti Quartet*

## FEATURING:

Freya Goldmark — Violin

Patrick Dawkins — Violin

Richard Jones — Viola

Val Welbanks — Cello

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## Nov.9.23

St. George by the Grange  
30 Stephanie St.

## Program

### 7:15pm Conversation with the Artists

### 7:45pm Young Artist Overture

Young Artist Overture featuring students from the Glenn Gould School performing György Ligeti's *Ramifications* (1968-1969)

### 8:00pm Main Show

**György Ligeti (HUN/AUS)** *Poème symphonique* for 100 Metronomes (1962)

**Tanya Tagaq (Inuk)** *Sivunnittinni* (2015)

**Ana Sokolović (SBA/CAN)** *Ungherese (Ghost 3)* (2023)

**Sidney Corbett (USA/GER)** *Suspended Disbelief* (2023)

**Nicole Lizée (CAN)** *Entreflaques* (2023)

**Mandhira de Saram (UK)** *Chers Amis* (2023)

**Lukas Ligeti (AUS/USA)** *Entasis* (2023)

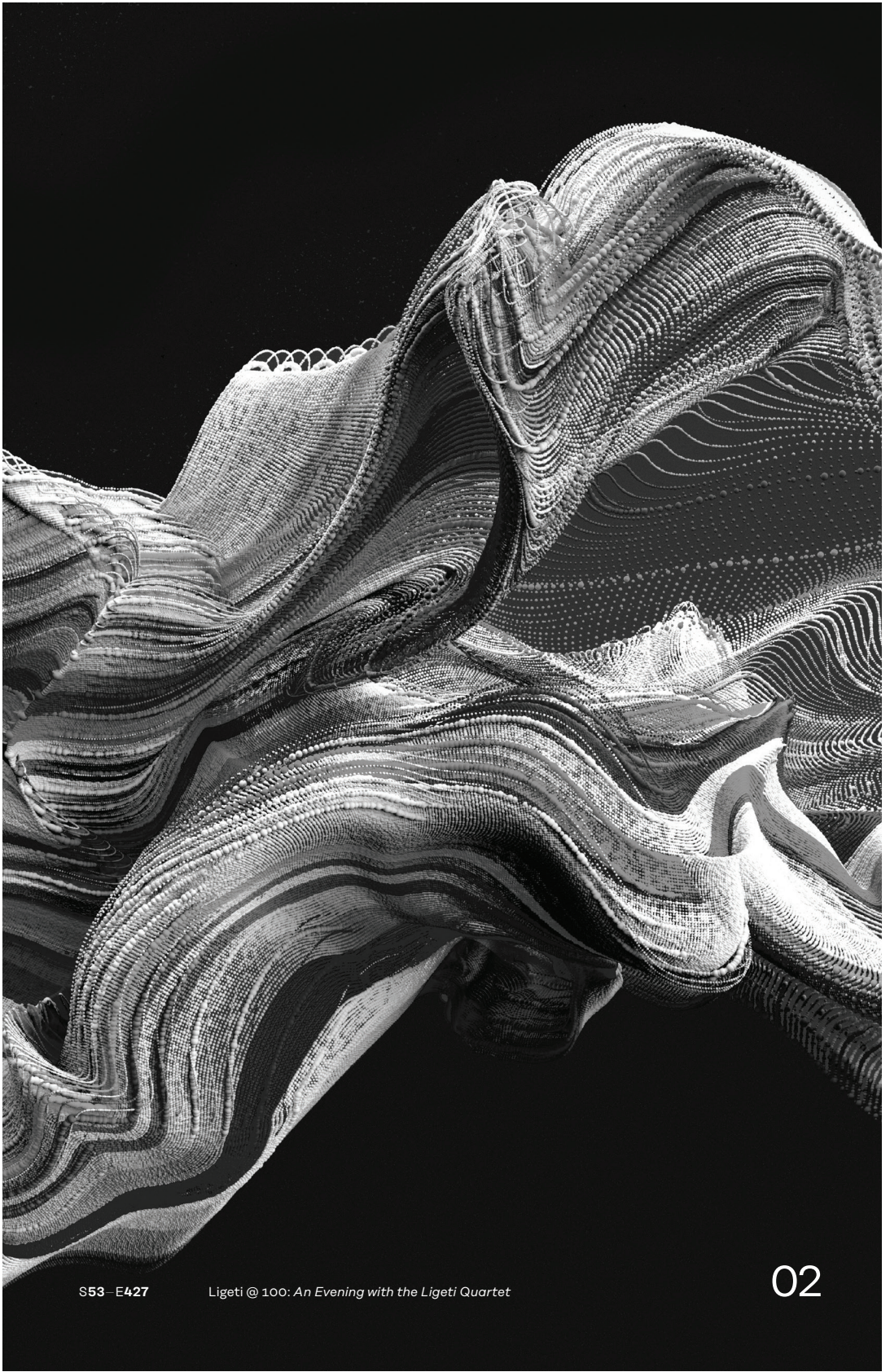
### Intermission

**Xiaoyong Chen (CHI/GER)** *The blocked and in between* (2023)

**Rolf Hind (UK)** *L'esprit d'escalier* (2023)

**Franghiz Ali-Zadeh (AZB)** *Fanfares for Ligeti* (2023)

**György Ligeti (HUN/AUS)** *String Quartet No. 2* (1968)



S53-E427

Ligeti @ 100: An Evening with the Ligeti Quartet

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# A Message from NMC Artistic Director Brian Current and Director of Operations & Communications, Emily Schimp



Welcome to our 53rd season, a journey through music without bounds.

We are thrilled to present a captivating season that merges modern art, classical music and cutting-edge technology. At the core of our season lies our biennial Future Resonance Festival, uniting musical cultures and creating a sonic experience unique to Toronto. Whether you're a lifelong music enthusiast or simply crave adventurous sounds, our performances are designed to engage and inspire across generations.

Discover outstanding performances by celebrated ensembles like Šabdagatitara, Ensemble Made in Canada and the Turning Point Ensemble.

From the latest in musical technology to cross-cultural collaborations, our series champions exceptional compositions from established masterpieces to the latest in exciting new international voices, all performed by our outstanding musicians.

At NMC, we're more than just a concert venue — we're a welcoming community where music lovers from all backgrounds find their place. No matter where you come from, if you share a passion for adventurous music, you will always have a home at NMC.

-Brian Current & Emily Schimp



The background of the page is a complex, abstract pattern. It consists of numerous fine, wavy lines that create a sense of depth and movement. These lines are interspersed with small, light-colored dots, giving the overall effect a textured, almost crystalline appearance. The colors are primarily in shades of gray, with some lighter areas where the dots are more concentrated.

# The Performers

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Ligeti © 100: An Evening with the Ligeti Quartet

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# Ligeti Quartet



## Biography:

The Ligeti Quartet has been at the forefront of modern and contemporary music since its formation in 2010, breaking new ground through innovative programming and championing of today's most exciting composers and artists.

The quartet's most recent album *Nuc* (2023, Mercury KX) is a celebration of Anna Meredith's music for string quartet, including arrangements by the quartet's viola player Richard Jones. "An album that continually surprises and enlightens" (BBC Music). Their tour of the album in 2023 is supported by Music In The Round and Arts Council England.

The quartet named themselves after the Hungarian composer György Ligeti (1923-2006), inspired by his kaleidoscopic musical outlook and tireless invention. 2023 will include

many concerts celebrating the 100th anniversary of his birth. They have curated the "Ligeti Day" at Aldeburgh Festival (23 June 2023) during which they performed two concerts of György Ligeti's music and the world premieres of 15 new commissions including *Entasis* by Lukas Ligeti (supported by Britten Pears Arts, BBC Radio 3, the Vaughan Williams Foundation, and Bourgie Hall).

Their previous album *Songbooks Vol. 1* (2020, Nonclassical), part of a long-standing collaboration with composer Christian Mason, explores the way in which the acoustic properties of the string quartet emulate the human voice through Mason's use of extended techniques and unique sound-worlds. "Magnificently vivid performances ... sheer unadulterated exuberance" (Gramophone).

## Ligeti Quartet Continued

Having played at landmark venues around the world including Carnegie Hall, Curtis Institute, Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, Barbican Hall, and Kings Place, the quartet also enjoy performing in more unusual places, previous venues including museums, galleries, theatres, pubs, planetariums, a fishing boat, and a cave. They have commissioned many new works and have collaborated with artists from all types of musical backgrounds including Anna Meredith, Xenia Pestova, Elliot Galvin, Kerry Andrew, Laura Jurd, Meilyr Jones, Neil Hannon, Seb Rochford, Shabaka Hutchings, Sean Noonan, Shed 7 and Submotion Orchestra.

The Ligeti Quartet are passionate about music teaching, supporting emerging composers, and taking new music to diverse audiences. They have held residencies at the universities of Cambridge (2016-19), Sheffield (2016-20), and Goldsmiths, University of London (2018-21), and Nottingham High School (2020-2022). The quartet's *Workout!* project initiated during the pandemic (supported by Arts Council England) was a huge undertaking in which they workshopped and recorded 100 new pieces by 100 composers from around the world.





# The Composers And Their Music

NMC

23/24 Concert Season

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# György Ligeti

## — *Poème Symphonique* for 100 Metronomes (1962)



### Program Note:

*Poème Symphonique* is written for 100 clockwork metronomes, wound up, set at varying speeds, and started together. The performance ends whenever the last metronome stops.

Ligeti's instructions for performance (in a 'verbal score', without any musical notation) are very thorough. They go to some length to describe how enough metronomes might be acquired in the first place: they recommend, for example, how borrowed ones should be labelled with their owners' names using either a fountain pen or ball-point pen.

The piece originated in Ligeti's brief period of work with the Fluxus artistic group in the early 60s, a movement that produced several such 'event-scores'. There were some protests from the audience after the first performance in 1963, and its planned Dutch television broadcast was cancelled.

In part due to the apparently ironic score, the *Poème* can be seen as quite a frivolous send-up - it manages to mock both stuffy concert tradition and Fluxus itself. However, the intricate rhythms and other sonic effects (including long silences) that arise quite naturally from the collection of inanimate ticking machines are typical of deep threads running

through Ligeti's later, more 'serious' music. He was fascinated by the complex effects that emerge from combinations of very slightly differing sounds, and by making structures out of whole textures rather than single lines. Similar ideas can be heard in many parts of the String Quartet No. 2.

### Biography:

*I almost always associate colours, form and consistencies with sounds and vice versa also associate all acoustic sensations with form, colour and material properties. Even abstract terms such as quantity, relationships, coherences and processes appear to me to be sensualised and have their place in an imaginary space.* (György Ligeti)

György Ligeti was born on 28.5.1923 as the son of Hungarian-Jewish parents in Dicsőszentmárton (now known as Târnăveni, in Transylvania/Romania). He studied at the Conservatory in Klausenburg with Ferenc Farkas from 1941 to 1943 and from 1945 to 1949 at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest with Sándor Veress, Pál Járdányi and Lajos Bárdos. Following the abatement of the Hungarian Revolution, he left his native country in December 1956 for both political and artistic reasons.



## György Ligeti Continued

During his time as freelancer in the West German Radio studio for electronic music in Cologne (1957-58), he undertook an intense study of the music of Karlheinz Stockhausen, Mauricio Kagel and Pierre Boulez. In the 1960s, Ligeti was associate professor at the Summer School for Contemporary Music in Darmstadt and guest professor at the Royal Swedish Academy of Music in Stockholm. He received a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Programme (DAAD) in Berlin for 1969-70 and was Composer in Residence at the Stanford University in California in 1972 before being appointed as Professor for Composition at the Hamburg Musikhochschule the following year. The composer made a substantial impact on international contemporary music both as a university professor (up to 1989) and as an active member of the music scene and became the musical aesthetic benchmark for a whole generation. György Ligeti died in Vienna on 12 June 2006.

In specialist musical circles, György Ligeti had already caused a sensation with his electronic composition *Artikulation* (1958) which had been produced in the Cologne recording studio. He subsequently gained immediate fame throughout the musical world with his orchestral works *Apparitions* (1958-59) and *Atmosphères* (1961). Leanings towards extreme micro-polyphony were already visible in the works he had previously composed in Hungary, for example the a capella choral works *Éjszaka* and *Reggel* from 1955. In the works from the late 1950s and 1960s, the concept of an extremely densely interwoven voice structure was increasingly contrasted with static tonal-spatial compositions. This was achieved with stunning effect: the maximum degree of movement in the voices develops into an audibly perceived spatially "static" music. In the 1980s and 1990s, complex polyrhythmic compositional techniques come to the foreground in Ligeti's works. This development can be followed clearly

in the *Etudes pour piano* which were published in three volumes and span the compositional period between 1985 and 2001. During the same period, Ligeti was working on the solo concertos for *Piano and Orchestra* (1985-88) and *Violin and Orchestra* (1990/92). These compositions – together with the *Hamburg Concerto* for horn and chamber orchestra (1998/99) – have subsequently been adopted in the solo repertoire of numerous soloists.

Ligeti's full-length stage work *Le Grand Macabre* was composed between 1974 and 1977 (revised version 1996) and was based on a fable by Michel de Ghelderode. The persiflage on the Last Judgement in the imaginary country of "Breughelland" develops into an absurd display of the all too human needs of its citizens. Ligeti also utilises the medium of parody in his music which ranges from acrobatic bel canto and complex tone row structures to grotesque *sprechgesang*.

Alongside membership in the Free Academy of Arts in Hamburg and the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, György Ligeti was honoured as the recipient of numerous prizes: the following list includes only a selection of these awards: Commandeur dans l'Ordre National des Arts et Lettres, Prix de composition musicale de la Fondation Prince Pierre de Monaco (both in 1988), the Music Prize from the Balzan Foundation (1991), the Ernst von Siemens Music Prize (1993), the UNESCO-IMC Music Prize (1996), honorary membership in the Romanian Academy (1997) and nomination as Associé étranger der Académie des Beaux Arts (1998). Ligeti additionally received the Sibelius Prize from the Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation (2000), the Kyoto Prize for Art and Science (2001), the Medal for Art and Science from the Senate of the City of Hamburg (2003), the Theodor W. Adorno Prize from the City of Frankfurt (2003) and the Polar Music Prize from the Royal Swedish Academy of Music (2004).

# Tanya Tagaq

## — *Sivunittinni* (2015)

### arr. Jacob Garchik



#### Program Note:

Canadian Inuk singer/composer, Tanya Tagaq, has become renowned for her revival of traditional Inuit throat singing (katajjaq) which she uses to create her own original compositions. Although Tagaq performs as a soloist, this vocal style is traditionally performed by two women duetting in a competition of vocal stamina.

Tagaq writes: “*Sivunittinni*, ‘the future ones’, comes from part of a poem I wrote for my album, and is the perfect title for this piece. My hope is to bring a little bit of the land to future musicians through this piece. There’s a disconnect in the human condition, a disconnect from nature, and it has caused a great deal of social anxiety and fear, as well as a lack of true meaning of health, and a lack of a relationship with what life is, so maybe this piece can be a little bit of a wake-up.”

This piece was commissioned by the Kronos Quartet for their marvellous Fifty for the Future project. Tagaq first made voice recordings, which were transcribed and arranged for string quartet by Jacob Garchik.

#### Biography:

From Ikaluktutiak (Cambridge Bay, Nunavut), internationally celebrated artist Tanya Tagaq is an improvisational singer, avant-garde composer and bestselling author. A member of the Order of Canada, Polaris Music Prize and JUNO Award winner and recipient of multiple honorary doctorates, Tagaq is an original disruptor, a world-changing figure at the forefront of seismic social, political and environmental change.



# Ana Sokolović

## — *Ungherese (Ghost 3)* (2023)



### Program Note:

Freely inspired by the modal, rhythmical and structural elements of *Automne à Varsovie* by György Ligeti, the piece *Ungherese* (Hungarian) is becoming a movement (*Ghost 3*) of my *Commedia dell'arte* String Quartet cycle. As are some other Ghosts in the *Commedia dell'arte* String Quartet cycle, *Ungherese* is an invented character inspired by Hungarian musical idioms.

### Biography:

A key figure in contemporary music, composer Ana Sokolović was born in Belgrade, Serbia and has been based in Montreal since 1992. With a background in the rhythmic universe of Balkan folklore, her music is coloured with playful images and inspired by differing artistic disciplines.

Her vast repertoire is regularly performed both in Canada and internationally. Fourth most performed female opera composer in the world in the last decade (according to Operabase), Sokolović hears her works performed

throughout Europe and North America. Her opera, *Svadba*, which “seems to invent a universal phonetics of the human heart” (*Le Monde*), has been performed more than fifty times.

Her career as a composer has been marked by numerous awards and recognitions, including two consecutive JUNOs in the category of “Classical Composition of the Year”. Sokolović’s works have been recorded on more than twenty discs.

In 2020, she joined the prestigious publishing house Boosey & Hawkes. The following year, she was appointed composer-in-residence at the Montreal Symphony Orchestra for three seasons. In 2022, Ana Sokolović was awarded the first Canada Research Chair in Opera Creation at l’Université de Montréal where she is also a professor of composition. This same year, she became the new artistic director of the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec.

# Sidney Corbett

## — *Suspended Disbelief* (2023)



### Program Note:

For this project I chose the eleventh etude, "en suspense". In reworking the piece for quartet I used only Ligeti's notes, adding nothing, but focusing on the middle voices, although the melodic upper lines also shine through. My piece has the same number of measures in the same tempo as the original. The four instruments all play with metal practice mutes, thus accentuating the feeling of absence.

### Biography:

"Music is for me a central source of spiritual nourishment", Sidney Corbett is quoted as saying in an interview with SWR (Southwest German Radio). Corbett is an artist who, outside the mainstream "new music" scene, maintains an independent and no less explicitly contemporary position.

His work draws on a wide range of musical and extra-musical sources, including literature and the visual arts, and also addresses philosophical and theological issues. Lyrical sensuality and complex rhythmic superimpositions of

pulsations are characteristic of his music. He is a seeker, an explorer, for whom music is a form of expression and his way of deciphering the world. Corbett has ever remained open-minded, curious, an artist who always questions his aesthetics and their possible trajectories.

A substantial part of his musical output is devoted to music theater. He has to date written six operas. His chamber opera, "Keine Stille (außer der Windes)," ("No Silence (but that of the wind)") based on texts by Fernando Pessoa, premiered in Bremen in 2006, and received a new production at the Nationaltheater Mannheim in 2022. His opera "Das Große Heft" ("The Notebook"), after Agosta Kristóf's novel, which premiered in Osnabrück in 2013, also came out in a new production in Braunschweig directed by Isabel Ostermann in 2022 as well. In 2018, Corbett's most recent opera, "San Paolo," based on an unrealized film script by Pier Paolo Pasolini, premiered in Osnabrück. "San Paolo" received the 2018 Palatinate Prize for Music.



## Sidney Corbett Continued

His recent works include "aporia," inspired by texts by Jacques Derrida, for the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, "Utopia and Intimacy," based on texts by Ernst Bloch, for violinist Nurit Stark and Schola Heidelberg and "Violence and Longing", for orchestra, which premiered in November 2021 with the Nationalorchester Mannheim under Alexander Soddy.

Born in Chicago in 1960, Sidney Corbett studied music and philosophy at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) and at Yale University, where he received his doctorate in 1989. From 1985 to 1988 he studied in Hamburg

with György Ligeti. In 2006 he received a professorship in composition at the Musikhochschule Mannheim. Releases of his works have appeared on Sony Classical, Cybele, Mode Records, CRI, Edition Zeitklang, Kreuzberg Records, Blue Griffen, Edition Kopernikus, and Ambitus Records. Sidney Corbett is a member of the Akademie der Künste (Academy of the Arts) in Berlin. Corbett's music is published and distributed worldwide by Edition C.F. Peters, Leipzig, London and New York. Since 2014 he has lived with his family in Schwetzingen.

## Nicole Lizée — *Entreflaques* (2023)



### Program Note:

As the glacier of Montreal winter recedes, the decay of infrastructure reveals itself - cracks and rivulets filled with water running to miniature

lakes in asphalt. Tiny moraines made of broken glass strewn about in an ecosystem that will never emerge. Lines scurry and meander like roughly hewn micropolyphony.

## Nicole Lizée Continued

### Biography:

Called “a brilliant musical scientist” (CBC), “breathtakingly inventive” (Sydney Times Herald), and “utterly inspiring” (I Care If You Listen), award winning composer and filmmaker Nicole Lizée explores themes of malfunction, psychedelia, turntablism, rave culture, urbex, film theory, thrash metal, experimental fashion, and glitch to create a new kind of expression. She writes for unorthodox instrument combinations including the Atari 2600 video game console, vintage board games, omnichords, stylophones, Simon™, Ouija boards, and karaoke tapes.

Her commission list of over 60 works includes the Kronos Quartet, the BBC Proms, the New York Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, Bang On a Can, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, l'Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Donaueschingen Festival, stargaze, Southbank Sinfonia, Colin Currie, Sô Percussion, Tapestry Opera, Quatuor Bozzini, and the Banff Centre.

Nicole's works are regularly performed worldwide to international acclaim. Awards include the 2022 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Opera, the Prix Opus for Composer of the Year, the SOCAN Jan. V. Matejcek Award, the Canada Council for the Arts Jules Léger Prize for Chamber Music, and the Canada Council Robert Fleming Prize for achievements in composition. She has received two JUNO nominations for composition of the year and her work was included on Ensemble Made in Canada's Mosaïque album, winner of the 2021 JUNO Classical Album of the Year. She is a Lucas Artists Fellow (California) and a Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellow (Italy). In 2016 she was selected by composer Howard Shore to be his protégée as part of the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards.

# Mandhira de Saram — *Chers Amis* (2023)



## Program Note:

Galamb Borong (my designated Étude) loosely translates as 'melancholic pigeon' in Hungarian. A Google rabbit hole led me to Cher Ami, a WWI hero carrier pigeon who was awarded the Croix de Guerre. However, truth be told, this piece is inspired by my Dear Friends in the Ligeti Quartet.

## Biography:

Mandhira is happiest bringing her playful energy and creativity to a breadth of projects across the less trodden paths of contemporary music, working with the likes of Anna Meredith, Laura Jurd and Shabaka Hutchings, and now increasingly as a solo artist.

Having left the Ligeti Quartet (Songbooks Vol. 1, 2021) - the plucky band of musical buccaneers she founded to explore the outer reaches of chamber repertoire - Mandhira's recent creative ventures include a commission with the cross-cultural Australian Art Orchestra (debuting in Melbourne and HCMF) and working with Jasmin Kent Rodgman

on the soundtrack to the feature film 'Bawa's Garden'. 2019 saw her commissioned to write a site-specific piece for the Barbican's Sound Unbound.

Equally at home leading orchestras in the world's most prestigious concert venues, recording film soundtracks at Abbey Road and improvising at Cafe Oto, her other projects include improvising duos with Steve Beresford and Benoit Delbecq (Spinneret, 2019) and regular appearances with Riot Ensemble and London Contemporary Orchestra.

She currently plays a 1735 Sanctus Seraphin violin kindly loaned to her by Derek Clements-Croome.



# Lukas Ligeti

## — *Entasis* (2023)



### Program Note:

"Entasis" refers to a slight swelling in the middle of a column, a technique used since the time of the ancient Greeks to prevent it from seeming concave to the observer. In this string quartet, however, it refers to subtle changes in intonation that make a melody seem both thicker in timbre and somewhat intangible as far as pitch is concerned. Various tuning systems are contrasted, including one with steps of  $2/3$  of a tone instead of half- or whole tones. In this unusual scale, seven steps (which would result in an octave in conventional tuning) result in a slightly enlarged major sixth, leading to novel harmonic possibilities. This opens the door to fuzzy melodies and approximate unisons, voices that almost seem to come together but never actually do, with the subtle differences between their sounds and pitches opening up new worlds waiting to be explored. Working in Africa, where instrument construction and tuning can change from one village to the next, has opened me up for such explorations; strict formal principles

are less relevant to this than intuitively following my ear and its longing for new sonic sensations.

### Biography:

Lukas Ligeti's compositions draw on diverse traditions including New York experimentalism, electronic music, jazz, African influences, and the European avant-garde. His music shows an interest in musical processes, complex polymetric structures and intercultural collaboration, with many of his works arising out of his deep, long-term engagement with the music of Africa. An established percussionist, especially in the fields of jazz and free improvisation, Lukas Ligeti has long worked with live electronics and has initiated numerous intercultural musical projects, such as his European-African electronica group Burkina Electric.

He is currently composing works for the Aris String Quartet, the Ligeti Quartet, for headphone orchestra, Burkina Electric + Ensemble BRuCH and the pianist Nicolas Namoradze. These

## Lukas Ligeti Continued

commissioned works and numerous existing compositions will receive world premieres, first performances and revivals this year in Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania, Great Britain, Canada, Belgium, Japan, Italy, South Africa, the USA and Switzerland. In 2023 Lukas Ligeti will be co-curator of the Oluzayo Festival (as part of the European Conference on African Studies African Futures Cologne) and Artistic Director of the World Music Days in Johannesburg on the occasion of 100 years of the International Society for New Music.

Lukas Ligeti studied composition and percussion at the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, where his tutors included Erich Urbanner, Kurt Schwertsik, George Crumb, Jonathan Harvey, and John Zorn, among others. He currently divides his time between Miami and South Africa, where he received his PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg) in 2020 and holds an honorary professorship at the University of Pretoria.

# Xiaoyong Chen

## — *The blocked and in between* (2023)



### Program Note:

Music transcends its appearance in order to reflect on the content of thinking and being. This quartet movement is comparable to my experience - from Peking Opera to modern. It contains many small facets of over 50 years... "Blocked" reflects the natural and the distorted life. Suddenly everything dissolves...

### Biography:

Xiaoyong Chen, (b.1955 in Beijing, China) is a Hamburg based composer whose eclectic oeuvre has been praised by the NDR (North-German-Radio & TV) as being a "bridge between the Chinese art world and the European avant-garde" and by the Züricher Oberlander as being a "delicate and sensitive... filigree of tones and colors".

Chen's works have been commissioned and performed by the majority of the world's most renowned music festivals including the Donaueschinger Musiktage, Holland Festival, ISCM World Music

Days, Festival Présences (Radio France), the Tanglewood Festival, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Warsaw Autumn, Cologne Music Triennale, Munich Biennale, Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, among others. His international career has led to close collaborations with the SWR Symphony, NDR-Symphony Hamburg, KBS Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, China National Symphony, Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Ensemble Modern, London Sinfonietta, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Auryn Quartet, the Arditti String Quartet; Kairos String Quartet and many others. Recent highlights of Chen's career include a portrait CD by the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen (lauded by the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik), a portrait concert by the NDR Symphony, Hamburg's Bach-Prize-Scholarship and Munich's Chr. & St. Kaske Prize.

As an educator, Chen is a professor of composition at the Hamburg Hochschule für Musik und Theater and has accepted various professorships at



## Xiaoyong Chen Continued

the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, the Central Conservatory of Music Beijing, and has been the composer in residence and an artistic advisor of the Danube University Centre for Contemporary Music. Since 1 March 2023, the composer has held a chair in composition at the Xinghai Conservatory, since then he has been living in Guangzhou. The most recent composition "The blocked and in between" was written during this stay.

After studying composition at the Central Conservatory of Music Beijing, Chen studied at the Hamburg Hochschule für Musik und Theater with György Ligeti (1985-1989) maintaining a close friendship with him until his death in 2006. Chen's works are exclusively published by the Internationale Sikorski Musikverlage, and in 2005, Chen became a member of the Hamburg Free Academy of Arts.

## Rolf Hind — *L'esprit d'escalier* (2023)



### Program Note:

In the apocalyptic resonance of the most Lisztian Etude, any words for Ligeti? "Thanks! 1987, I, a student, played you the Etudes: my career began."

Tiny tributes to your soundworld, in an endlessly rising staircase:

- i) bells, drums and fiddles
- ii) devil's advocate
- iii) a bit of an atmosphere.

Go well, G.L.

### Biography:

Rolf Hind's career has established him as a major force as soloist, composer, recording artist, chamber musician, pedagogue, collaborator and concert planner. He has given recitals at many of Europe's leading new music festivals, and at Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House and on tours of Korea, Taiwan and Cuba.

Rolf has worked with many leading conductors, including Ashkenazy,

## Rolf Hind Continued

Knussen, Rattle, David Robertson and Andrew Davis and appeared seven times at the BBC Proms. Orchestras he has worked with include the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Munich Philharmonic, Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Malmö Symphony, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, many appearances with the London Sinfonietta, the LPO, RPO, and with all the BBC orchestras.

Composers who have worked with Rolf or written for him include Tan Dun, John Adams, Helmut Lachenmann, Unsuk Chin, Elliott Carter, George Benjamin and James MacMillan. Rolf's compositions include a piano concerto, *Maya-Sesha* (nominated for a British Composer's Award) and a concerto for accordion, premiered at London's Barbican Centre. Much of his music is inspired by India, where he travels often, while drawing on the technical adventurousness of performers including himself.

An interest in new dance has resulted in collaborations including with choreographer Rui Horta on a large-scale tour of a new work, *Danza Preparata*, featuring John Cage's *Sonatas and Interludes* for prepared piano, with dancer.

As pianist Rolf curated and performed in *Occupy The Pianos*, a piano festival which became a regular feature at St John's Smith Square in London and also travelled to France and Denmark. He initiated a project in March 2020 which produced over 100 new short piano pieces from composers far and wide, intended as responses to lockdown, a fascinating range of pieces which he is now including in recital and which has been performed in London, Glasgow and Zagreb. He re-visited a masterpiece in the form of Messiaen's *Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jesus*.

His first opera, *Lost in Thought*, a 'Mindfulness opera' commissioned by Mahogany Opera Group was premiered at The Barbican in London. Current composition plans include an operatic project about the poet Sufi Rumi, working with Rolf's long-time collaborator Frederick Wake-Walker and the Anglo-US poet Dante Micheaux. He is also writing a song-cycle for Elaine Mitchener and Apartment House for the Wigmore Hall in 2024.

# Franghiz Ali-Zadeh

## — *Fanfares for Ligeti* (2023)



### Program Note:

Ligeti lived a difficult life full of hardships. Recognition came to him very late. It must be admitted that even today the number of performances of his wonderful works does not correspond to their high quality and unique content. his cycle of piano studies, a wonderful gift for the 100th anniversary of the great Hungarian composer. During the lifetime of the unforgettable Master, no one performed a fanfare in his honour, and I wanted to exclaim in my dedication in the year of the 100th anniversary of the innovator of the 20th century: "BRAVO, Maestro Ligeti!"

### Biography:

Franghiz Ali-Zadeh comes from Baku in Azerbaijan. In 1999/2000, she spent a year working in Berlin as a DAAD scholarship holder, and since then has divided her time between Germany and Azerbaijan. In November 2000, she was awarded the honorary title "People's Artist of the Republic of Azerbaijan" and in 2008 she was named 'UNESCO Artist for Peace'.

Performers such as Mstislav Rostropovich, Yo-Yo Ma, Evelyn Glennie, Ivan Monighetti, David Geringas, Julius Berger, Wu Man, Alexander Ivashkin, Alim Qasimov, Vladimir Tonkha, Elsbeth Moser and many others have championed her music. Ensembles and orchestras from all over the world enthusiastically perform her works.

In a unique way, Ali-Zadeh succeeds in fusing the musical traditions of her home country with modern Western compositional techniques. Her music, so rich in contrasts, reflects lightness and vehemence, playful light-heartedness and brooding thoughts, delicate transparency and strong colours, quiet simplicity and turbulent virtuosity as well as meditation and ecstasy. So, on the one hand, the composer reflects the religious and cultural rift between East and West and national traditions, while on the other hand she translates her own personal tensions into music, tensions that have arisen through the course of her life.

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# György Ligeti

## — *String Quartet No. 2* (2023)



### Program Note:

- I. Allegro nervoso – Prestissimo – Allegro moderato – Ferocissimo
- II. Sostenuto, molto calmo
- III. Come un meccanismo di precisione
- IV. Presto furioso, brutale, tumultuoso
- V. Allegro con delicatezza

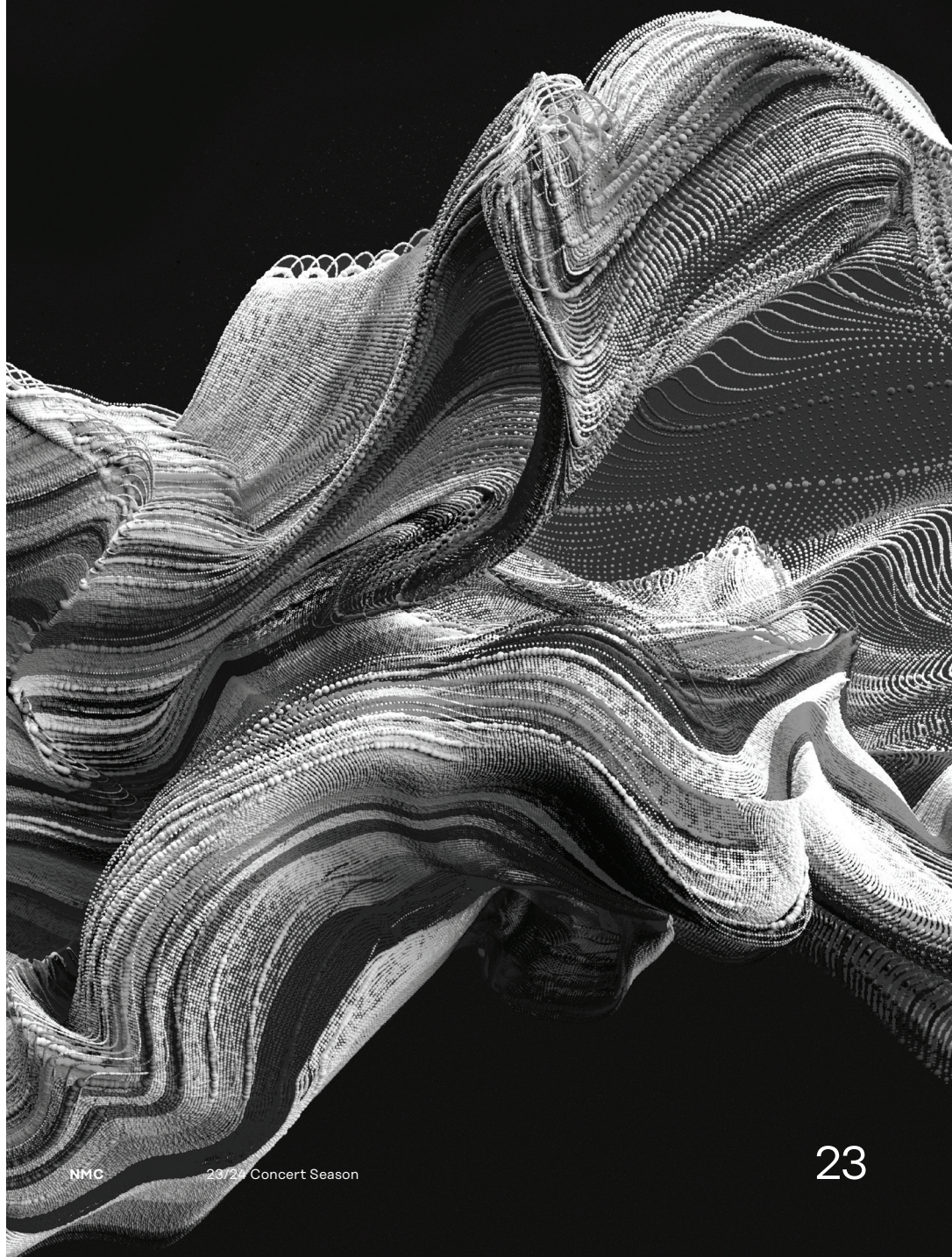
Ligeti described his second string quartet as the culmination of his modernist experimentation during the 1960s; it remains one of the most radical contributions to the quartet genre. While his first string quartet (1952–54) is strongly classical and is clearly indebted to the quartets of Bartók, such traditional elements are here replaced by the textural and timbral processes that were set to become hallmarks of the Ligeti style.

The quartet maintains an underlying sense of continuity despite extreme contrasts in character between movements. Throughout the work Ligeti applies processes of micropolyphony, originally developed for orchestral forces in *Atmosphères* (1961) and later *Lontano*

(1967), where intricately layered canons form slowly shifting bodies of sound. He describes this effect as ‘a kind of impenetrable texture, something like a very densely woven cobweb’.

Most individual notes are insignificant, and the pulse is frequently imperceptible. In the outer movements musical shapes emerge from swarms of sound — in the first, the effect is highly charged and passionate; in the fifth, calm and distant. The second movement starts with a single note, slowly distorting and fragmenting. The third is formed of repeated notes, very much reminiscent of the ticking metronomes in *Poème Symphonique*. The fourth movement is a brief, explosive outburst (it is literally destructive: ‘If this movement is played properly, a lot of bow hair will be loose by the end’), followed by the resolution of the fifth.

All program notes and biographies provided by the Ligeti Quartet or the  
Composer, unless otherwise specified.





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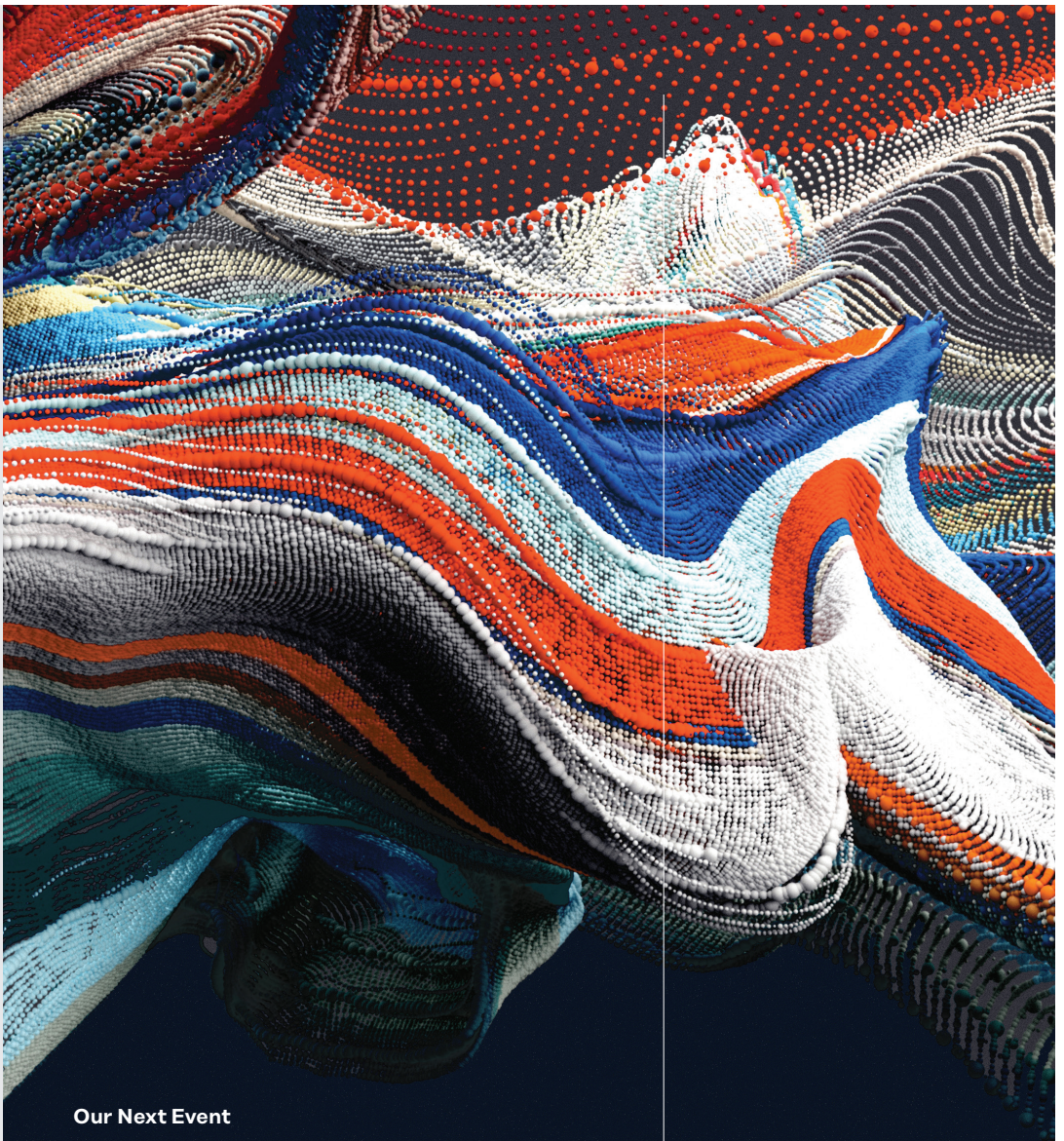
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