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A Tribute to Gilles Tremblay


Aventa Ensemble | **Bill Linwood** director

Saturday April 10, 2010 • Betty Oliphant Theatre

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39th season | 328th event
Saturday April 10, 2010
Betty Oliphant Theatre
404 Jarvis Street
7:15 Introduction | 8:00 pm Concert

A Tribute to Gilles Tremblay

Noa Frenkel contralto **Vincent Ranallo** baritone
Olaf Tzschoppe percussion **Miranda Wong** piano
Aventa Ensemble | **Bill Linwood** director

Programme:

Wolf Edwards (Canada, 1972)

Altus (2005) for ensemble

Dániel Péter Biró (Hungary/USA, 1969)

Mishpatim – Laws Part III – Masked Shadows (2010)
for contralto, solo percussion, ensemble and live electronics

– *Intermission* –

Gilles Tremblay (Canada, 1932)

À quelle heure commence le temps? (1999)
for baritone, solo piano and ensemble

Aventa Ensemble | **Bill Linwood** conductor

Mark McGregor flute **Russell Bajer** oboe
Caroline Gauthier clarinet **Brent Besner** clarinet, bass clarinet
Jennifer Gunter bassoon **Louis Ranger** trumpet
Darnell Linwood horn **François Lévesque** trombone
Miranda Wong piano **Corey Rae**, **Robert Slapcoff** percussion
Muge Buyukcelen, **Sharon Stanis** violins **Mieka Michaux** viola
Alasdair Money cello **Darren Buhr** double bass



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emphasized, reiterated and faded. As a musical/textual commentary of the ancient Hebrew text, the composition thematizes historical and phenomenological relationships between music and text, tradition and autonomy, collective and stranger, integration and estrangement. Re-tracing the historical becoming of these relationships to their contemporary predicament, the composition exists as a historicized, sonorous question. Many thanks to Steven Takasugi and Gidi Nahshon for their help with this piece. *Mishpatim Tslalim Deulim* is dedicated to Bill Linwood.

— *Dániel Péter Biró*

Translation

I will send an angel before you to safeguard you on the way, and bring you to the place that I have prepared.

Be careful in his presence and heed his voice. Do not rebel against him, since My name is with him. He will not pardon your disobedience.

But if you obey him and do all that I say, then I will hate your enemies and attack your foes.

An angel will go before you and bring you among the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Yebusites, and I will [then] annihilate them.

Do not bow down to their gods and do not serve them. Do not follow the ways of [these nations]. You must tear down [their idols] and break their sacred pillars.

You will then serve God your Lord, and He will bless your bread and your water. I will banish sickness from among you.

In your land, no woman will suffer miscarriage or remain childless. I will make you live out full lives.

and I will throw all the people among whom you are coming into a panic. I will make all your enemies turn their backs [and flee] from you.

I will send deadly wasps ahead of you, and they will drive out the Hivites, Canaanites and Hittites before you.

I will not drive them out in a single year, however, lest the land become depopulated, and the wild animals become too many for you [to contend with].

I will drive [the inhabitants] out little by little, giving you a chance to increase and [fully] occupy the land.

I will set your borders from the Red Sea to the Philistine Sea, from the desert to the river. I will give the land's inhabitants into your hand, and you will drive them before you.

Do not make a treaty with [these nations] or with their gods.

Do not allow them to reside in your land, since they may then make you sin to Me. You may even end up worshiping their gods, and it will be a fatal trap to you.

At what time does time begin?

At what time does the time to live begin?
I don't know, I don't know, I don't know.

Who will tell me when time... begins?
At what time? At what instant? At what first instant?
Is the answer in the raging wind? Is it audible in its silence?

Alone.
I sailed as a solitary sailor.
I looked at the wind;
ceaselessly, it tried
to whip my brow, to erase
my face.
A woollen cap held back my yattering hair; in this way
I had silenced it.

Brow crowned by the wind.

Free, with the freedom of a ship's stem,
I amazed the sun.
With my emaciated laugh,
I dazzled the night;
with a move of my hand I splattered
the stars and the rain.

I wanted to see the wind;
it deleted my eyes,
swept away my words less ample
than the swell on which my voice
grated more raucously and wildly
than the cries of the ropes.

At what time does the time to live begin?
I don't know, I don't know, I don't know...

Sail.
I was a sail, moaning and naked.
Wind and sail, fraternal adversaries.
Sail, haughty ally, the time of a brief detour;
betrayed friend, strange finery,
renascent desires of the wave and the wind.
Proud trophy of the ever-conquering trade winds,

je dressais, verticale,
la grandeur et la gloire des navigateurs au long cours,
femme éclatante all vent, femme de sel et d'azur,
clamant la mer et charmant ses héros
des histoires de tempête ou bien de calmes infinis,
ostensible conquête serrant au plus près – séductrice
héroïque – le vent invincible invisible.

Qui me dira quand commence le temps ?
À quelle heure? A quel instant? A quel premier instant ?

Et puis, je fus la mer,
mitraille de sel et d'ambre. Le vent,
toujours le vent, complice de toujours,
racle ma peau si grasse...
mais ne se noie jamais dans mes dessous d'écume
ou mes surplis d'argent.
J'étais la mer unique et changeante,
versatile beauté, fleur létale
immense.

Je roule et je m'étends,
je dévore et j'inonde de mon sang
les vaisseaux, intrepides esquifs.
Je couvre de ma voix, la voix des solitaires ;
je les épouse quand ils m'aiment. Hélas,
ils m'aiment toujours trop ; je leur offre
l'asile des profondeurs : mariage secret,
martelle alliance.

A quelle heure commence le temps de vivre ?
Je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas...
J'aimais la mer.
Je lui avais clamé mon amour, seul
en plein océan. J'ai senti à ses longs soubresauts
qu'elle m'aimait.

Le vent, le vent jaloux, le vent me sentait son rival.
La mer jouait, cruelle; riait de ma querelle
avec le vent. Soudain...

Est-ce le vent ? Est-ce la mer ?
Est-ce la voile qui ploie, le ciel qui se déchire ?
Est-ce moi ?

A wave sufficed.

What do I know about the time to live? What have I known of my life?
Of its days, its hours and all its instants?

I have shattered. No boundaries. Grain of sand. Dust.
Mass of molecules. Isolated molecule. Orphan. Atom. Particle. Vibration.
Trace. Quantum quantity. Charm. Colour. Recollection. Nuance.
Soupçon. Nothing. Less than nothing. Anti-particle. Inverse quantum
Quantity. Virtue. Dissipating variety. Symmetry. Uncertain movement.
Memory. Force. Transistive phase, Imaginative value. Photon.
Light of the sea.

Will the time of a wingbeat suffice to find out
how long a man lives – under what sky and on which fertile ground?
Beneath which wind, against which tide?

Improbable probability.
Therefore, lie.
Space. Black and white night; black from being white,
Disgusting milky whiteness.
Empty, pallid...
Virtuality at the confines of all virtualities: worse, far worse than a lie.
Too uncertain perhaps; paradise of the I-don't-knows; final home of the
I-don't-knows.

At what time does the time to live begin?
I don't know, I don't know, I don't know...

Only the wind is real; the wind that spares no one and nothing.
The sea is the sole pleasure.
No song is greater than that of the sail, and no word freer than that of the
human, not-so-human voice with the mad look of the ocean, with
the blind wind that blows in vain.

I wanted to see the wind...

I am the wind.
I am looking at you.
I attack your glance and burn the iris of your eyes.
I make love with the sea.
I am the beauty of the wind
and I make the sea beautiful.
I acclaim the horizon.

Je suis l'espace terrestre et galactique.
Haleur des rivages,
détresse de la foi,
je porte et j'emporte l'horizon.
Nul ne le sait, nul ne me voit.
Je vole, je triche, j'affole le temps et les hommes.
Je viole, je tue, je déplace l'espace, la mer, la terre,
sable, sel et ciel et soleil.
J'érode les mains des marins.

J'apprivoise et j'apaise la houle.
Je hante les déserts.
Je tutoie les voiles les plus hautes et de noble lignage.
Je me ris de savoir quand commence le temps.
Je claque le front des marins. Beaux joueurs solitaires aux regards de
diamant, ils m'interrogent tous et s'obstinent sans cesse comme si je savais,
moi, le vent à quelle heure commence le temps de vivre.
Et quand je le saurais, je ne le dirais pas.

Grande colère, bruyant secret que dissipe le silence quand s'apaise le vent.
La nuit donne à la nuit la couleur des matins. Me reconnaîtras-tu enfin ?

Qui m'appelle ? C'est moi, la lumière de tous les matins.
La lumière, toute la lumière !

Bernard Lévy

I am terrestrial and galactic space.
Hauler on the shore,
faith in distress,
I carry the horizon and carry it away.
No one knows it, no one sees me.
I steal, I cheat, I upset time and men.
I rape, I kill, I displace space, the sea, the earth,
sand, salt and sky and sun.
I erode the sailors' hands.

I tame the swell and appease it.
I haunt the deserts.
I speak freely with the highest sails of noble lineage.
Little do I care when time begins.
I slap sailors on their foreheads. Fine, solitary players with diamond-sharp
looks, they all ask me questions and persist stubbornly as if I might know
at what time the time to live begins.
And even if I knew, I would say nothing.

Great anger, burning secret dissipated by the silence when the wind dies
down. Night gives morning colours to the night. Will you recognize me at last?

Who is calling me? It is I – the light of all mornings.
The light, all the light!

Bernard Lévy – Translated by S. Miller-Sanchez

Une lame a suffi.

Que sais-je du temps de vivre? Qu'ai-je su de ma vie ?
De ses jours, de ses heures et de tous ses instants ?

Je suis éclaté. Sans frontière. Grain de sable. Poussière.
Amas moléculaire. Molécule isolée, orpheline. Atome. Particule. Vibration.
Trace. Quantité quantique. Charme. Couleur. Souvenir. Nuance. Soupçon.
Rien. Moins que rien. Anti-particule. Quantité quantique inverse. Vertu.
Variété dissipative. Symétrie. Mouvement aléatoire. Mémoire. Force. Phase
transitive. Valeur imaginaire. Photon.
Lumière de la mer.

Retrouverai-je, au battement d'une aile,
le temps d'une vie d'homme – Sous quel ciel et sur quel limon? Sous quel
vent, contre quelle marée?

Improbable probabilité.
Alors mensonge.
Espace. Nuit noire et blanche ; noire à force d'être blanche,
Écoeurante blancheur lactée.
Vide, livide...
Virtualité aux confins de toutes virtualités: pire, pire que mensonge.
Trop incertains peut-être ; paradis des je-ne-sais-pas ; mouvoir des
je-ne-sais-pas.

À quelle heure commence le temps de vivre ?
Je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas...

Il n'est de vrai que le vent qui nul ni rien n'épargne.
Il n'est de plaisir que la mer.
Il n'est de chant plus haut que celui de la voile et de plus libre parole que
celle de la voix humaine-malhumaine au regard fou de l'océan, au souffle
aveugle et vain du vent.

Je voulais voir le vent...

Je suis le vent.
Je te regarde.
Je brûle ton regard et j'irise tes yeux.
Je fais l'amour avec la mer.
Je suis la beauté du vent
et je fais la mer belle.
J'acclame l'horizon.

I raised, upright,
the grandeur and the glory of great seafaring navigators;
a woman billowing in the wind, salty and azure this woman,
proclaiming the sea and charming its heroes
from tales of storms or infinite calm,
ostensible conquest – heroic seductress – clutching
the invisible, invincible wind.

Who will tell me when time... begins?
At what time? At what moment? At what first moment?

And then, I was the sea,
a salty and amber volley. The wind,
always the wind, eternal accomplice,
scrapes my greasy skin...
but never drowns in my foaming underside
or my silver surplice.
I was the sea, unique and changeable,
fickle beauty, lethal flower,
immense.

I roll and I stretch,
I devour vessels, daring skiffs,
and use my blood to drown them.
With my voice I cover the voice of solitary sailors;
I marry them when they love me. Alas,
they always love me too much; I offer them
the haven of my depths: secret marriage,
mortal alliance.

At what time does the time to live begin?
I don't know, I don't know, I don't know...
I loved the sea.
I had proclaimed my love to her, alone
in mid-ocean. By her long starts, I sensed
she loved me too.

The wind, the jealous wind, the wind felt I was its rival.
The sea was playing, cruel; she was laughing at my quarrel
with the wind. Suddenly...

Is it the wind? Is it the sea?
Is it the sail bending, the sky being torn apart?
Is it me?

À quelle heure commence le temps ?

À quelle heure commence le temps de vivre ?
Je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas.

Qui me dira quand commence... le temps ?
À quelle heure ? À quel instant ? A quel premier instant ?
La réponse est-elle dans la rage du vent ? Est-elle audible à son silence ?

Solitaire.
Je naviguais en marin solitaire.
Je regardais le vent :
sans cesse, il tentait
d'offenser mon front, d'effacer
mon visage.
Un bonnet de laine retenait mes cheveux trop bavards; ainsi
les avais-je fait taire.

Front couronné du vent.

Libre d'une liberté d'étrave,
j'étonnais le soleil.
De mon rire émacié,
j'éblouissais la nuit :
j'eclaboussais d'un signe de la main
les étoiles et la pluie.

Je voulais voir le vent ;
Il raturait mes yeux,
balayait mes paroles moins amples
que la houle sur laquelle ma voix
grinçait plus rauque et plus sauvage
que les cris des filins.

À quelle heure commence le temps de vivre ?
Je ne sais pas, je ne sa is pas, je ne sais pas, je ne sais pas ...

Voile.
J'étais voile gémissante et nue.
Vent et voile, adversaires fraternels.
Voile, alliée altièrè, le temps d'un bref détour ;
amie trahie, parure singulière,
désirs renaissants de la vague et du vent.
Altièrè frondaïson des alizés toujours vainqueurs,

Gilles Tremblay

À quelle heure commence le temps ?

Gilles Tremblay has traveled an exemplary route. The Quebec pianist and composer has never stopped pushing back the frontiers of his research. His contribution to contemporary music is remarkable, distinguished as it is by an exceptional open-mindedness and a keen awareness of the very nature of sound.

Gilles Tremblay received his early music training in Montreal from Jocelyne Binet, Edmond Trudel and Gabriel Cusson; later on, he attended the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal where he studied piano with Germaine Malépart and composition with Claude Champagne. In 1954, he took part in the first genuine new music concert organized in Montreal. He pursued his studies in Paris with Olivier Messiaen, Yvonne Loriod, Maurice Martenot and Andrée Vaurabourg-Honegger, receiving a First Prize in musical analysis as well as a First Medal in ondes Martenot at the Conservatoire de Paris. While in Europe he met Pierre Boulez, Iannis Xenakis and Karlheinz Stockhausen, and he was introduced to electroacoustic techniques through Pierre Schaeffer's Groupe de recherches musicales.

Upon his return to Quebec, Gilles Tremblay undertook numerous activities, dividing his time between teaching – he is a professor at the Conservatoire de musique du Québec – lecturing and working for CBC radio where he hosted the Festivals series and took part in several programs with Fernand Ouellette. In spite of his busy schedule, he pursued his own research, composed music, received many commissions and dedicated much time to the sound installation for the Quebec Pavilion at Expo '67, which won him the Calixa-Lavallée Prize. Major works were composed in the following years, including *Fleuves* (1976), *Vers le Soleil* (1978) and *Compostelle I* (1978), a tribute to Messiaen on his 70th birthday, and more recently *Avec, Wampum symphonique* (1992) for soprano, bass, narrator, mixed choir and orchestra to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the founding of Montreal, the cello concerto *Les pierres crieront* (1998), *En partage* (2002) for viola and orchestra and the Enchanted Opera *L'eau qui danse, la pomme qui chante, et l'oiseau qui dit la vérité* (2004-2007) which was debuted by Chants Libres in Montreal last November.

Acclaimed for its richness of sound and aesthetics, Tremblay's music has earned an international reputation and strongly influenced the development of music and contemporary art in Canada.

Words, music. The words enter into the resonance. The musician will be further struck by certain words, certain ideas. Elucidation and commentary, the enchantment takes form (like Gregorian

vocalisation and exaltation) establishing itself as another poem, a musical one, in counterpoint from to the first.

An initial reading highlights the important moments and the metaphysical aspect of the question: "When does time begin? At what hour? At what instant? At which first instant?" However, the drama unfolds progressively, in a parallel movement to the composition, to the limits of endurance, like an immense metaphor of our époque and transition into a new millennium; it is thus a navigation. At the very heart of this navigation-poem: shipwreck and death. However the word "light" is engraved there ("light of the sea") like an indelible desire. Its genesis is in the luminous splashes of the instrumental prelude radiating from the piano and especially at the end, a jet of rays, an epiphany, passionate as the pounding of waves.

— Gilles Tremblay

Artist Biographies

Noa Frenkel contralto

After graduating cum laude from the Rubin Academy of music at the Tel-Aviv University, the Israeli contralto Noa Frenkel continued her vocal studies at the Royal Conservatory of The Netherlands in The Hague. Noa's concert repertoire ranges from Renaissance to contemporary music. Recent performances include Handel's *Belshazzar* and *Judas Machabeus*, Respigi's *Il Tramonto* and Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*. In 2006 Noa Frenkel made her debut at the Salzburger Festspiele in the hybrid W.A. Mozart & C. Czernowin world premiere *Zaide/Adama*. She has recently performed with the Basel opera, the Nantes-Angers opera, and the Dutch Reis opera, as well as a new production of *Zaide/Adama* at the opera houses of Bremen and Mannheim for which she has enjoyed wide critical acclaim. She performs regularly with renowned ensembles such as the Ensemble Modern, Frankfurt and the Ensemble Recherche, Freiburg, the Schonberg Ensemble, Amsterdam and the Ensemble Intercontemporain, Paris. She is the soloist of the Dutch ensemble MAE whom with she regularly performs and tours Europe, Japan and the United States. Many of the ensemble's commissions were composed especially for her voice.

Vincent Ranallo baritone

Vincent Ranallo brings vocal passion and precision to a vast repertoire, ranging from early Baroque to avant-garde, with a strong emphasis on the latter. Lauded by critics for his vocal intelligence and onstage comic talents, Mr. Ranallo performs with ensembles such as the McGill Chamber Orchestra, I Musici, Orchestre Métropolitain, Ensemble contemporain de Montréal, SMCQ, KORE ensemble, Chants Libres and Les Voix Humaines. He has participated in festivals including the Orford Arts Center, Codes d'Accès, Métropolis bleu and Montréal Baroque. Numerous Québec and European composers have been inspired by his voice, his creative personality and his

evolving musicianship. He has participated in numerous Montréal opera and chamber music creations and premieres. A graduate from the Conservatoire de musique du Québec à Montréal, he studied with Marie Daveluy and Gilles Tremblay. He was awarded a Ph.D in voice performance from the Université de Montréal, studying with Rosemarie Landry and Mark Pedrotti. Mr. Ranallo's thesis focused on aural creativity in the works of composer Gilles Tremblay.

Olaf Tzschoppe percussion

Olaf Tzschoppe was born in Kiel in 1962. After studying percussion at the Musikhochschule in Freiburg he attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor on a German Academic Exchange Scholarship. He appears regularly as a soloist at such festivals as the Munich Biennale and the Ljubljana Contemporary Music Festival. Tzschoppe is a member of Les Percussions de Strasbourg. He is also a founding member of the Freiburg Ensemble SurPlus and has given guest performances with the musikFabrik (Düsseldorf), Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt) and Klangforum (Vienna). From 1991 to 1995 and again in 2000/01 Tzschoppe taught percussion at the Musikhochschule in Freiburg. He holds international masterclasses and conducts artistic and educational projects in Germany, France, Spain and Switzerland. He has been professor for percussion at the Hochschule in Bremen since 2004.

Miranda Wong piano

Solo recitalist, chamber musician, and teacher, Miranda Wong is as passionate about the music of the traditional classical repertoire as she is about the esoteric complexities of the contemporary idiom. Her work with Aventa has been highlighted by tours in Eastern Canada and Europe, while her solo career has taken her across Canada, the United States, and England. Miranda received her training from Leonard Shure, Leon Fleisher, Robin Wood, and Ellen Mack. She earned her Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Victoria, and completed her graduate work at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (London, England) and the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, Maryland). Presently, she belongs to the faculty of the School of Music at the University of British Columbia, as well as the Music Department of Vancouver Community College.

Bill Linwood conductor

A native of Saskatoon, Bill Linwood is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Aventa Ensemble. He has conducted such classic repertoire as Boulez' *Derive I*, Ligeti's Chamber Concerto and Fernyehough's *Flurries*, as well as Canadian premieres of a wide variety of Canadian and international repertoire. Highlights include the Canadian premieres of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' *De Assumptione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, Thomas Ades' *Concerto Conciso* with Louis Lortie as piano soloist and the November 2007 North American premiere of Pierre Boulez' *Dérive II* (2006). A champion of the music of Quebec composer Gilles Tremblay, Bill has conducted several programs and recordings devoted to his music. Other recent conducting highlights included the North American premiere of Norwegian Rolf Wallin's *Appearances*, the North American premiere of Anders Nordentoft's opera *On this*

Planet, the US premiere of Poul Ruders' *Abysm* in New York City and a concert dedicated to Mauricio Kagel with Calgary's Land's End Ensemble. In 2009, Bill led Aventa in an international tour that introduced Canadian new music to audiences in New York City, Munich and Copenhagen. Upcoming projects include a new opera from British composer Gavin Bryars, based on the life of Marilyn Monroe.

Aventa Ensemble

With a reputation for superb performance and ambitious programming, Aventa has established itself as one of Canada's leading contemporary music ensembles. Comprised of musicians who are passionate about new music and its place in our culture, Aventa pushes musical boundaries through diverse projects, collaboration and cultural exchange. Promoting and fostering new music has been at the core of Aventa's work since its founding. The ensemble regularly commissions both Canadian and international new works and has presented premieres of over 50 works both in Canada and on tour. Aventa has enjoyed a long-standing relationship with renowned Quebec composer Gilles Tremblay and his music since our inaugural concert in 2003 through recordings, radio broadcasts and tours. The ensemble is honored to participate in "Hommage à Gilles Tremblay", a year long celebration of the composer's music organized by Société de musique contemporaine du Québec.

In June 2009, Aventa embarked on an international tour involving 16 musicians to New York City, Munich and Copenhagen. This tour focused on Canadian and Scandinavian repertoire and included 6 world premieres. Munich's A•Devantgarde Festival presented a concert dedicated to Canadian music and opened with Paul Frehner's virtuosic new work, *God save the human cannonball*. "...it is vital, angular music, which the superb Canadian ensemble Aventa, under the direction of Bill Linwood, implemented with precision" – *Sueddeutsche, München*. Aventa's current concert season comes to a close with a performance of Pierre Boulez's *Le Marteau sans maître*, one of the great works of the twentieth century. Based on the poetry of René Char, *Le Marteau sans maître* is scored for contralto, alto flute, viola, guitar and three percussionists. Following the April performance in Victoria this production will also be featured in Montreal and Halifax.



Friday May 28, 2010

Brian's Picks

The Music Gallery, 197 John Street
NMC Ensemble - Brian Current, direction

Music by

- ✦ Nicole Lizée, Oliver Schneller
- Bruno Mantovani, Fabien Levy
- Enno Poppe, ✦ Analia Lugdar

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