



Robert Aitken, artistic director

Dear Friends,

There are now less than two weeks to our final event of the season, "**Brian's Picks**". Rehearsals have begun in earnest and we think it is going to be very a special evening indeed. The concert features works selected and conducted by **Brian Current**, an award-winning Toronto composer whose music has been performed and broadcast in 35 countries around the world. He has extensive conducting experience and is currently the director of the New Music Ensemble of the Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Brian has selected some exceptionally challenging works by prominent members of his generation from Germany, France, Argentina and Canada. You can hear his comments on the composers and excerpts of their music in a podcast he has prepared as an introduction to the concert at www.briancurrent.com/podcastNMCmay28.mp3.

There is a link to the podcast on our own site www.NewMusicConcerts.com along with complete biographies and program notes.

We're pleased to note that CBC Radio 2 will record this performance for broadcast on *The Signal* with host Laurie Brown and we thank them for the support they've given us over the years. In case you're wondering where artistic director Bob Aitken will be on this occasion, take a look in the woodwind section where you will find him working very hard alongside 20 of Toronto's finest musicians in our New Music Concerts Ensemble. Three of the composers will be in attendance and we hope you'll come out to join us and end our 39th season with a bang! I look forward to raising a glass with you in the Fellowship Room of the Music Gallery following the concert.

Sincerely yours,

David Olds
General Manager

Brian's Picks

Friday May 28, 2010

The Music Gallery, 197 John Street, Toronto

7:15 Introduction | 8:00 Concert

New Music Concerts Ensemble

Brian Current, direction

Programme:

Oliver Schneller (Germany, b.1969)

Trio (1998-1999) for accordion, cello and piano

Nicole Lizée (Canada, b.1973)

Television (2001) for flute and 2 percussionists

Fabien Levy (France, b.1968)

I. Querwüchsig (2006, rev 2009) for 13 instruments

Enno Poppe (Germany, b.1969)

Salz (2005) for 11 instruments and electronics

Analia Llugdar (Canada, b.1972) –

Todos los recuerdos presentes envolvían ese sonido y algo me miró (2007) for 15 instruments

Concert 8:00pm | Introduction 7:15 | Tickets 416.961.9594

\$30 regular | **\$20** seniors / arts workers | **\$10** students

Oliver Schneller was born in Cologne, grew up in Europe, Africa and SouthEast Asia and studied composition at the New England Conservatory, Boston. In 2002 he completed his doctorate in composition with Tristan Murail at Columbia University in New York. From 2002-2004 he lived in Paris as a "compositeur en recherche" at IRCAM. He returned to Germany to teach at the Universität der Künste in Berlin. Since October 2009 Schneller has served as professor of composition at the State Conservatory of Music in Stuttgart.

The focus of Oliver Schneller's compositional work lies in the creation of networks between musical instruments, architectural spaces and live-computer processing. His works have been performed at numerous international music festivals in Europe, the USA, and Asia including Aspen, Tanglewood, MATA Festival New York, Festival Agora Paris, Wien Modern, Maerzmusik Berlin, Witten Tage für Neue Kammermusik, Ultraschall Berlin, Musica (Strasbourg), IFNM Darmstadt, Aspen, the "Millenium Stage Series" at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, Musicacoustica Beijing, Takefu (Japan)and ICMC 2003 Singapore.

Besides the main focus of his compositional work – music and architecture – Oliver Schneller is involved with intercultural and cross-disciplinary projects. In 2004 he was the founder and artistic director of "Tracing Migrations", a music festival in Berlin, featuring the works of contemporary

emerging composers from Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq. In 2005 he curated a project on Eastern and Western concepts of beauty in music at Berlin's House of World Cultures with composers Toshio Hosokawa and Helmut Lachenmann and the Diotima Quartet. In 2006 he was a lecturer and coach for young composers from Cairo as part of the Global Interplay Project hosted by Musik der Jahrhunderte /SWR Stuttgart. From 1990-91 he worked for the Goethe Institute in Kathmandu, Nepal on a project to support and sustain indigenous music cultures.

Trio (1998) for accordion, piano and cello

In *Trio* the interaction between the three instruments is determined in terms of articulation, resonance and spectrum: the limited sustain of the piano is compensated by the accordion while the relatively weaker attack characteristics of the accordion are complemented by the percussive attack intensity of the piano. The cello, capable of both sustained and percussive attack, punctuates, mediates, and occasionally merges with the piano/accordion-resonance-body. In terms of spectral evolution the focal points of sonority are derived from partials of the lowest D on the accordion, the fundamental to which the pitch axis of the piece, G, momentarily drops down to half-way through the composition. The point of departure for the use of the accordion was my love for the sound of the shô in Japanese Gagaku music.

— Oliver Schneller

Montreal-based composer/keyboardist **Nicole Lizée** received a Master of Music degree in composition from McGill University. Her Masters' thesis consisted of a work for large ensemble and turntablist that featured DJ techniques fully notated and integrated into a concert music setting. Along with turntables, she has written for other unorthodox instrument combinations fused with live ensemble – including the Atari 2600 video game console, reel-to-reel machines, Simon and Merlin hand held games, and corrupted karaoke tapes.

Lizée has received commissions from several artists and ensembles including l'Orchestre Métropolitain du Grand Montréal, CBC, So Percussion, ECM+, Kore, Continuum, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Bradyworks, Toca Loca, Motion Ensemble, and Les Productions featuring Martin Tétrault. Her works have been performed in festivals including the MATA Festival (NYC), Winnipeg New Music Festival (Canada), Huddersfield (UK), X Avant (Canada) and C3 (Berlin). In 2010 Nicole was awarded a fellowship from the prestigious Civitella Ranieri Foundation based in New York City. She has twice been named a finalist for the Jules-Léger

Prize, most recently in 2007 for the work *This Will Not Be Televised*, scored for chamber ensemble and turntables. This work was selected as a top ten recommended work at the 2008 UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers. Her 2002 work *Left Brain/Right Brain* was selected to represent Canada at the ISCM World Music Days in Germany. In 2002 she was awarded the Canada Council Robert Fleming Prize for achievements in composition. Upcoming projects include works for Kronos Quartet, Standing Wave (Vancouver) and pianist Gregory Oh (Toronto).

Television (2001) for flute and 2 percussionists

The genesis of anyone's preoccupations and fixations can be found in one's early, formative years. In my case, as the daughter of an electronics retailer and collector, I found an early appreciation (that exists to this day) for the inner workings of electronic devices. Exposed circuitry, glowing cathode ray tubes, resistors and capacitors lined in rows...soldered point to point. This was my daily glimpse into a world unseen by the mass consumer who, upon purchase, was strictly advised (by a small orange sticker) that there were "no user serviceable parts".

I was privy to the hows and whys of wood paneled televisions, massive console record player/stereo/receiver combos, and as time wore on, any number of era-defining contraptions. The 80s saw the last hurrah of devices covered in oak and other wood grains and ushered in such life changing and time saving inventions as the Beta format VCR, the laser disc player and the Walkman.

This piece is not inspired so much by the content broadcast on television in my formative years as much as it is inspired by the symmetry and beauty of the interior components that were a constant backdrop during my childhood.

— Nicole Lizée

Fabien Lévy studied composition with Gérard Grisey at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris. He received a Ph.D. in musicology from l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales. He worked at IRCAM as pedagogical advisor (1999-2000) and lectured in the musicology department at the Sorbonne University (Paris). In 2001 he was resident of the DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm in Berlin and in 2002 of the Villa Medici / French academy in Rome. He won the 2004 Förderpreis from the Ernst von Siemens Foundation for music. His works, published by Billaudot and Ricordi Germany, have been performed by l'itinéraire, the London Sinfonietta, the Ensemble Modern of Frankfurt, the Argento Ensemble, the Habanera Quartet, the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra and the Berlin Radio Symphony

orchestra (among others). He taught orchestration from 2004-2006 at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns-Eisler in Berlin (Germany), and is currently Assistant Professor of Composition at Columbia University in New York (USA).

I. *Querwüchsig* (2006, rev 2009) for 13 instruments

“Querwüchsig” is a German neologism formed from the root words *Quer* (diagonal) and *Wuchs/Wüchsig* (to grow or sprout), and echoes the German *Urwüchsig* (defiant, primitive) or *Wildwuchs* (dense growth). The title derives in part from the rapid progress of the piece, which sprang forth (something quite rare in my music) despite the chaos of relocating from place to place (Berlin, Paris, New York), and also by the character of the music, in which wild and hairy thematic cells move violently from one part to another in a technique inspired by the cross-rhythms of Central African polyphony which I have developed over the years and have applied to every musical parameter. The piece, commissioned by l'Ensemble XXI, is dedicated to Daniel D'Adamo et Dominique Dournaud in friendship.

— Fabien Lévy
Translation: Daniel Foley

Enno Poppe studied composition with Friedrich Goldmann, Gösta Neuwirth and others, as well as conducting, at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. He also studied sound synthesis at the Technische Universität Berlin and algorithmic composition with Hermann Taube at ZKM Karlsruhe and in addition, lived as a fellow at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris in 1996. He has earned many honors, including the Berliner Senatsstipendium (1992, 1995, 1998), the MKK-Stipendium (1994), the Boris-Blacher-Preis (1998, for *Gelöschte Lieder*), and a scholarship from the Wilfried-Steinbrenner-Stiftung (2000). He has also received the Kompositionspreis from the city of Stuttgart (2001, for *Knochen*), the Förderpreis from the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung (2001-02), the Busoni-Preis from the Akademie der Künste in Berlin (2002), and a scholarship from the Akademie Schloss Solitude (2002-03). His works have been played throughout Germany and in Barcelona, Lviv, Paris, St. Petersburg, and Vienna by leading ensembles, such as Ensemble Modern and Klangforum Wien. Since 1998, he has been the artistic director and conductor of ensemble mosaik, which specializes in new music and since 2002 has taught composition at the Hanns Eisler Hochschule für Musik in Berlin.

Salz (2005) for 11 instruments and electronics

I took my microscope and placed things underneath it that are actually too big. For years I've been working with escalations, processes of growth and degeneration. It was time for this dramaturgical

medium to become the focal point itself and to be further examined. “Salt” consists of 125 escalations, waves that are arranged in waves, that are arranged in waves. At the same time everything gradually becomes faster and louder, aiming for a double refraction. The manipulative method of the escalation is thwarted, fragmented and pressed into a rigid, foreseeable order. Predictability can have a level of energy that could never be achieved through surprises. After all tension means that you actually know what is going to happen next.

The sound is produced by a thirty-second-tone Hammond Organ (that is 192 tones per octave). At first, the instrument simply plays a series of chords that very slowly, almost imperceptibly, shift upwards. The presumptuous wish is to inter-relate all details and to anchor them thematically. The starting point here is my reverence for the musicians of Klangforum Wien (for whom I am honoured to write my fifth piece). As I do not want to disappoint them, I am trying to insert information into every crevasse of the composition. I am constantly observing the formation of chaos. The piece threatens to sink into chaos no fewer than 125 times. It is the order itself that precipitates this.

Salt is vital to our lives, but in the sea we die of thirst.
— Enno Poppe
Translation: Alice Jaroschek and Doina Popescu

Born in Argentina in 1972, **Analia Llugdar** carried out studies in piano and composition at Cordoba National University (Argentina) where she obtained a degree in piano performance in 1999. She continued her composition studies at Laval University and then at the Université de Montréal where she completed her Masters under the direction of José Evangelista. She completed her Doctorate at the same institution under the guidance of Denis Gougeon. Over the course of her composing career, she has received the 1st Prize at the Université de Montréal Orchestra Composition Competition, 2nd Prize at SOCAN's Sir Ernest MacMillan Awards, 1st Prize in the chamber music category at the CBC Radia Canada's 15th National Competition for Young Composers, the Jeunesses Musicales du Canada Award, and the Grand Prix of the Canada Council for the Arts. In 2007 Llugdar received the Quebec-Flanders Contemporary Music Prize, the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music in 2008 and most recently the 2009 Opus Composer of the Year award from the conseil québécois de la musique. Her works have been performed by le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, L'Ensemble Contemporaine de Montréal, Trio Fibonacci, duo Prémices, l'Orchestre symphonique de Laval, Les Enfants Terribles, l'ensemble s.i.c, l'ensemble I solisti del vento among others. She recently received a bursary from Spain's Ministry of Culture to study at the computer and electronic music facility of the Queen Sofia Art Centre in Madrid. Always concerned with the contemporary reality of man,

Analia Llugdar's music is characterized by her meticulous research of sonorities and harmonies which translates into a discourse that is a subtle artistic criticism of the real world. This can be said of her works based on literary texts as well as those that are more abstract in nature. Llugdar is a member of the national board of the Canadian League of Composers, an Associate of the Canadian Music Centre and a member of the artistic committee of the Société de Musique Contemporain du Québec.

«**Todos los recuerdos presentes envolvían
ese sonido y algo me miró.**»

[*All the present memories enclosed this sound,
and something watched me.*]

This work is a reflection on the place that memory occupies in artistic creation in general and in music in particular. It is also an aesthetic meditation on the importance of memory in human life as a weapon of resistance. The triggering element in this work was a phrase by Luis Sepúlveda, which could have remained unuttered but has resounded in my ears ever since I first heard it. He said that he was able to resist imprisonment during the Chilean military dictatorship thanks to his memories of literary works that he had read, which allowed him to evade the harshness of reality. These memories defended him from madness and death. Similarly, the title of the work was taken from a poem by Leonel Lienlaf, a Mapuche poet, who evokes the memory of tales passed down to him from his grandmother. Thus, I use the idea of memory as a restorative gesture that repeats, seeks and builds itself in the process of returning to itself. Within this process, the changes in resonance consist of the sonorous material undergoing a permanent transformation. The notion of memory joins the idea of resonance and other musical ideas are generated. The work is divided into twelve sections, articulated by contrasts, gradual transformations or triggering elements that appear by chance. These sections resemble memory in that the latter is not a logical evocation but a chaotic jumble of infinite possibilities which make sense.

— Analia Llugdar

Translation: Gustavo Beritognolo

A 2005 Guggenheim Fellow and recipient of the 2003 Barlow Prize, **Brian Current** has been repeatedly recognized as one of the leading composers of his generation in North America. His music, lauded and performed internationally as well as broadcast in over 35 countries, is renowned for its energy, wit and daring bravado.

Brian Current's music has been performed across North America and abroad by the Esprit Orchestra, the American Composers Orchestra (Carnegie Hall), the Oakland Symphony, the Indianapolis Symphony, the Winnipeg

Symphony, the Warsaw National Philharmonic, the Vancouver Symphony, the CBC Radio Orchestra, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, The Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Symphony Nova Scotia (Koussevitzky commission), Monday Evening Concerts (Los Angeles), the VOX festival of the New York City Opera, the St. Lawrence String Quartet, Winston Choi, the Honens International Piano Competition and others.

Raised in Ottawa, Brian Current studied music at McGill University in Montreal with Bengt Hambreaus and John Rea. He later completed his Ph.D. in composition on full fellowship from the University of California at Berkeley in 2002, where he was also active as a conductor. He has since been featured conducting with numerous ensembles, including the Kensington Symphonietta, Soundstreams, CBC's In Performance and On Stage, as well as the Esprit Orchestra's New Waves Festival. Since 2006, Brian Current has been the artistic director and conductor of the Royal Conservatory of Music's New Music Ensemble, which performs several concerts per year of international contemporary works.

In October of 2009, Brian Current was the artistic director of Nuit Blanche at the Royal Conservatory in Toronto. In celebration of the opening of the new Koerner Hall, Brian directed over 200 musicians, singers, staff, volunteers and electronics in a 12-hour installation of James Tenney's *In a Large Open Space* which spanned the entire building. An estimated 15,000 people attended throughout the night.

In 2001, Brian won the Grand Prize in the CBC National Competition for Young Composers for his piece *For the Time Being*, which then went on to win Selected Work (under 30) at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris. In 2002 it opened the inaugural concert of the Warsaw Autumn Festival, conducted by Antoni Wit. Recently Brian Current's new disc *This Isn't Silence: Works for Symphony Orchestra*, was nominated for a Juno Award. The award presentations featured Current conducting in a first-ever CBC broadcast of Classical Juno nominees.

Brian Current has received residencies from Yaddo, MacDowell, JUSFC (Kyoto, Japan) and Bogliasco (Italy) and is the recipient of the assistance of numerous foundations and arts councils. He lives in Toronto and is on the board of directors of the Toronto Arts Council, the Canadian League of Composers, New Music Concerts and other organizations.

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