21C Music Festival
21C Cinq à Sept
Saturday, January 18, 2020 at 5:00pm
Temerty Theatre

Ryan Davis, viola
Rosie Gallagher, flute
The Glenn Gould School Quartet

PROGRAM

Ryan Davis: new composition for viola, voice & live electronics (world premiere)

Kaija Saariaho: Laconisme de l’âile (Canadian premiere)

Laurie Anderson: Shutter Island * (Canadian premiere)
   I. Shutter Island
   II. Crystal
   III. Airy

Christos Hatzis: “The Mega4 Meta4” from Earthrise

* Laurie Anderson’s Shutter Island was commissioned as part of the Kronos Performing Arts Association's Fifty for the Future: The Kronos Learning Repertoire, which is made possible by a group of adventurous partners, including Carnegie Hall, The Royal Conservatory, and many others.

Kaija Saariaho
Having studied in Helsinki, Fribourg, and Paris, Kaija Saariaho is a prominent member of a group of Finnish artists who are making a worldwide impact. At IRCAM, she developed techniques of computer-assisted composition and acquired fluency in working on tape and with live electronics. This experience influenced her approach to writing for orchestra, with its emphasis on the shaping of dense masses of sound in slow transformations. Although much of her catalogue comprises chamber works, she has turned increasingly to larger forces and broader structures.

   The detailed notation using harmonics, microtonal, and detailed continuum of sound extending from pure tone to unpitched noise are all features found in one of her most frequently performed works, Graal Théâtre for violin and orchestra. Her catalogue also includes Aile du songe, Notes on Light, D’OM LE VRAI SENS, and Maan Varjot. In 2015, Gerald Finley and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel, premiered True Fire for baritone and orchestra.

   From the later 1990s, Saariaho has turned to opera with outstanding success: L’amour de loin, Adrian Mater, Emilie, and the oratorio La passion de Simone. Her opera Only the Sound Remains was premiered in March 2016 at the Dutch National Opera with other performances in Paris, Helsinki, Madrid, and Toronto.

   Saariaho’s major composing awards include Grawemeyer Award, Wihuri Prize, Nemmers Prize, Sonning Prize, and Polar Music Prize. In 2015, she was the judge of the Tōru Takemitsu Composition Award.

   Kaija Saariaho’s harp concerto Trans was premiered in August 2016 by Xavier de Maistre and the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Ernest Martinez-Izquierdo at the Suntory Hall in Tokyo.

Laconisme de l’âile, for flute and electronics (1982) (Canadian premiere)

Laconisme de l’âile appeared in 1982. Kaija Saariaho had then moved to Paris, where she had become familiar with the use of computers in music making. The piece, although composed at the same time as the tape work Vers le blanc, prepared at the IRCAM studio, is nevertheless a purely handwritten work. It begins with a text recited by the flautist, before gradually going over the sounds of the flute. It realizes an idea, already conceived in sah den
Vögeln, of a scale formed by tonal colours, one end of which is very brilliant and pure, whilst the other has a coarse, harsh sound. This idea has been carried even further in later works. By regulating the timbre, the tone of the sound, Saariajo tries to create tensions within and between the different musical forms. In Laconisme de l’aile, this procedure has been used to create highly coloured and plurivalent lines.

About this piece, Saariajo writes: “The possibility to move from secret whispers into clear, beautiful, and ‘abstract’ sound was one of the starting points for Laconisme de l’aile, started in Freiburg and finished in Paris in 1982. Another important image on which I focused my mind when writing this piece was that of birds, not really their song but rather the lines they draw in the sky when flying. I had already started the piece when I felt the need to add a text in the beginning, which would in fact be the source for the musical material. The book Oiseaux (Birds) by the Saint-John Perse (1887-1975, a French poet and diplomat and Nobel Prize winner in 1960) got into my hands in the public library of Freiburg, and I found a passage in this collection of poems that described somehow the images that I had in my mind: that of birds, fighting gravity, flying away, secret and immortal.” - sariaho.org

Laurie Anderson

Laurie Anderson is one of America’s most renowned and daring creative pioneers. Best known for her multimedia presentations, innovative use of technology, and first-person style, she is a writer, director, visual artist, and vocalist who has created groundbreaking works that span the worlds of art, theater, and experimental music.


In 2002, Anderson was appointed the first artist-in-residence of NASA, which culminated in her 2004 solo performance The End of the Moon, the second in a series of three “story” performances along with Happiness (2001) and Dirtday (2012), all of which toured extensively internationally.

Anderson has published eight books. Her most recent release, All The Things I Lost In The Flood (Rizzoli), is a series of essays about pictures, language, and codes.

Anderson’s films include numerous music videos and installation works as well as Carmen (1992), the high definition Hidden Inside Mountains (2005), and Arte-commissioned Heart of a Dog (2015), which was chosen as an official selection of the 2015 Venice and Toronto Film Festivals.

In 2017, Anderson joined four other artists in Mass MoCA’s Building 6 inaugurating a 15-year rotating exhibition of work. She will show pieces from her archive as well as new work. Included in the first exhibition cycle are her virtual reality collaborations with Hsin-Chien Huang, Chalkroom and Aloft. Chalkroom has been featured in film festivals all over the world, including the Venice Film Festival where it won the award for Best VR Experience under its Italian title, La camera insabbia. Along with the most recent VR piece, To the Moon, currently at the Royal Ontario Museum until January 27, all three pieces were presented at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival.

Shutter Island (2017) (Canadian premiere)

Laurie Anderson’s first collaboration with Kronos Quartet centered on the experience of loss. Her mordant, wry, and disquieting account of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Sandy became the emotional core of the Grammy nominated 2018 album Landfall (Nonesuch), though she started writing and performing with Kronos a year before the epic 2012 storm. Somehow, after decades of moving in overlapping creative circles, Anderson and Kronos carved out time for an extended sojourn as her life took a series of wrenching turns. The resulting song cycle is unlike anything else in Anderson’s vast, variegated, and endlessly entertaining oeuvre.

Over more than four decades, Anderson has created radically inviting works that encompass songs and recitation, soundtracks and literary meditations, solo performances, and multimedia installations. An inventor who has thrived using cutting edge technologies, she has recorded bona fide pop hits (particularly 1981’s “O Superman”) and served as NASA’s first artist-in-residence. It was only a matter of time before she joined forces with Kronos.

“We have been on the same circuit for decades, waving as our buses passed,” Anderson says. “It surprised all of us that we had never done anything before. It was great fun coming up with things. I would write phrases, and they would play them and improvise and I would work with the improvisation. It was not like I was sitting in my studio and handed them the complete score. This really was a collaboration.”
In many ways, Anderson’s *Shutter Island* is an outpost that extends the singular *Landfall* odyssey. Commissioned as part of Kronos’s *Fifty for the Future* initiative and premiered on March 17, 2017 at the Ecstatic Music Festival at The Greene Space at WNYC/WQXR, the piece carries Anderson’s unmistakable DNA. Skittish and insistent, incantatory and beatific, *Shutter Island* offers fresh insight into the capacious creative universe of an artist whose search for new sounds and textures has led to fantastical destinations.

“Some of the experimenting that Kronos did with Laurie influenced the writing, but just how that influence manifested itself, I am not sure,” says Kronos’s David Harrington. “I can recognize some of the licks as things that we were close to in the early improvising that we explored for *Landfall*. She recorded everything we did, and then she would go through and mine and refine phrases. I think she used a little bit of that process here.”

For Harrington, *Shutter Island* embodies the *Fifty for the Future* ideal in offering string quartets a portal into Anderson’s universe “and the way she arrives at ideas,” he says. “There are so many adventures that we get to have that other groups are never going to experience unless we find a way of sharing.” As for the title, Anderson avers that it has nothing to do with Dennis Lahane’s 2003 novel or the 2010 film directed by Martin Scorsese. “The words just got picked out of a dictionary,” she says. “It has nothing to do with anything. I still like the middle movement. The others I like technically, but the middle I can dream into.”

- Andy Gilbert

**Christos Hatzis**

With awards in 2017, 2008, and 2006, several national and international awards, and a slew of recent commissions by and for internationally recognized touring artists such as violinists Hilary Hahn and Shlomo Mintz, percussionists Dame Evelyn Glennie and Beverley Johnston, the Winnipeg and Montreal Symphony Orchestras, and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, among others, University of Toronto professor Christos Hatzis is widely recognized as “one of the most important composers writing today” (CBC) and “a contemporary Canadian master” (The New Yorker).

Hatzis is pioneering a distinct breed of 21st century music, which combines intellectual complexity and clarity, emotional/psychological directness, and technical mastery of various media and musical idioms. His recent work focuses on indigenous issues, geopolitical diversity, migration, environmental consciousness, and human rights. Although technically challenging, Hatzis’s music has established a deep and direct connection with a growing number of musicians and listeners of every walk of life worldwide (his audio playlist has registered over 1,700,000 hits since 2008). Two of his recent large-scale works, *Gaia* and *Going Home Star: Truth and Reconciliation*, are indicative of his most recent musical thinking.

Hatzis’s music is constantly presented in performance and broadcast with a stream of CD recordings on Naxos, Deutsche Grammophon, Centrediscs, EMI, Analekta, Sony, CBC, and other major and independent labels, several of them all-Hatzis albums. Hilary Hahn’s recording, which included Hatzis’s *Coming To*, won a Grammy Award in 2015 and topped many international top and top 10 lists that year. Upcoming projects include an all-Hatzis CD with Canadian singer Sarah Slean and Symphony Nova Scotia, and a number of YouTube videos.

**“The Mega4 Meta4” from *Earthrise*, for viola and digital audio**

Commissioned by Douglas Perry with a grant from the Ontario Arts Council.

“The Mega4 Meta4” is the fifth and final piece of *Earthrise*, a pentalogy of electroacoustic works (*Nadir, Orbiting Garden, The Temptation of St. Anthony*, and *Crucifix*). With the exception of the opening pentatonic theme, “The Mega4 Meta4” is constructed entirely from quoted material (mainly from the four earlier pieces of *Earthrise* and from Albinoni’s Adagio in G Minor for Organ and Strings). The quoted material is used as a starting point. Once stated, it is developed, repeated, and juxtaposed on top of other, sometimes non-compatible material in such a way that the overall effect is that of dynamic pluralism and constant motion in opposite directions. “The Mega4 Meta4” brings all the aesthetic and technical concerns of the earlier pieces to their logical conclusion. To a considerably greater extent than the other four works of *Earthrise*, it is a “dependent” composition. Not so much because it is not musically and dramatically self-contained, but because the development of its thematic and motivic ideas assume particular significance when seen against the background of how these same ideas were treated in the previous pieces. As in the other pieces of *Earthrise*, the musical material plays equally significant roles on two different planes, the purely musical and the symbolic. Even during its most outwardly mundane moments, the music has an inner cryptic identity. The choice of cheap ‘street’ material for example, and the conscious effort to realize the unexplored and often overlooked potential hidden within it, is to me, symbolically the musical analogue of the biblical quotation “The stone which was rejected by the architects has become a cornerstone.” The chronological and geographical eclecticism,
the transcendental union of heterogeneous materials, and my entire ‘grassroots’ approach to composition, are outward manifestation of deeper religious and philosophical convictions about our world and our role in it. ‘Heavy’ as all this may sound, the music itself is anything but. Throughout Earthrise there is a sense of ‘lightness,’ which permeates every aspect of the composition. Religious symbolism and humour exist side-by-side in a mutually exclusive yet complementary partnership.

“The Mega4 Meta4” takes its name from my first computer, an Atari Mega4 ST. - Christos Hatzis

Ryan Davis
Viola
Hailed as a “lovely violist” (The WholeNote), Canadian Ryan Davis is swiftly emerging as a sought-after artist in solo, chamber, and orchestral performances. His musical studies include a Bachelor of Music from McGill University, where he graduated with the Outstanding Achievement in Viola distinction as a scholarship student of Andre Roy, a Master of Music from Yale University as a student of Ettore Causa, and an Artist Diploma from the Colburn School under the tutelage of Paul Coletti. Under the guidance of Steven Dann and Barry Shiffman, he is the first violist to be selected as a Rebanks Fellow in the Rebanks Family Fellowship and International Performance Residency Program at The Glenn Gould School.

Rosie Gallagher
Flute
Born in Sydney, Australia, Rosie Gallagher has performed with orchestras at Carnegie Hall, Royal Festival Hall, and Lincoln Center. She made her solo debut at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall as a first prize winner of the Alexander & Buono International Flute Competition. She earned her Bachelor of Music from The Juilliard School and her Master of Music from the Royal Academy of Music. This season, she is a member of the prestigious Rebanks Family Fellowship and International Performance Residency Program. Most recently, Ms. Gallagher has been engaged as a core member of Carnegie Hall’s Ensemble Connect.