

Cinq à Sept

Saturday, May 27, 2017 at 5:00 pm

Temerty Theatre

VC2

Amahl Arulanandam, cello

Bryan Holt, cello

Geoffrey Conquer, piano

Morgan-Paige Melbourne, piano

Aaron Parker, electronics

Katya Poplyansky, amplified violin

21C Ensemble

Jacob Clewell, viola

Amahl Arulanandam, cello

Chris Lamont, bass

Joanna Wu, flute

Alheli Pimienta, piccolo

Marc Blouin, clarinet

Bee Ungar, bassoon

Kevin Shen, saxophone

Austin Lamarch, percussion

Chung-Ling Lo, percussion

Bryn Lutek, percussion

Michael Murphy, percussion

Josh Wynnyk, percussion

Phoebe Powell, harp

Linda Ruan, celeste

Kara Huber, piano

PROGRAM

Alexina Louie: "Warrior" and "Memories In An Ancient Garden" from *Scenes From A Jade Terrace*

Raphael Weinroth-Browne: *Triumvirate*

Kotoka Suzuki: *Orison* (world premiere)

Kotoka Suzuki: *Shimmer, Tree* (Canadian premiere)

I. Like a gentle wind

II. I count the fleeing hours

Aaron Parker: *warehouse* (Canadian premiere)

Orison commissioned by *The Royal Conservatory /Koerner Hall*

Alexina Louie

Composer

Alexina Louie is one of Canada's most highly regarded and most often performed composers. Her desire for self-expression, her recognizable sound world, as well as her explorations of Asian music, art, and philosophy have contributed to the development of her unique musical voice. Louie's work is communicative and highly dramatic, and it pushes the boundaries of convention and tradition. Her orchestral works have been performed by such esteemed conductors as Sir Andrew Davis, Leonard Slatkin, Kent Nagano, Peter Oundjian, Bramwell Tovey, Charles Dutoit, and Ingo Metzmacher. Her vocal and operatic works have been sung by such highly regarded singers as Barbara Hannigan, Russell Braun, and John Relyea.

Louie has been commissioned to compose for all musical genres including solo, chamber, orchestra, ballet, and opera. Her music has been performed and broadcast internationally in Europe, USA, Australia, and China. Of the performance of *Beyond Time* by the extraordinary violinist James Ehnes, who commissioned it in 2014, the *Edmonton Journal* wrote: "*Beyond Time* confirms, if one needed any confirmation, that Alexina Louie, with her kind of 21st century impressionism, is one of the finest composers in Canada today."

An Officer of the Order of Canada, a recipient of the Order of Ontario, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, Alexina Louie received an honorary doctorate from the University of Calgary in 2002. Among her many awards and distinctions, she has twice won the Juno Award in the category of Best Classical Composition. Alexina Louie's extensive catalogue can be found at alexinalouie.ca.

"Warrior" and "Memories In An Ancient Garden" from *Scenes From A Jade Terrace*

"Warrior" and "Memories In An Ancient Garden" are two movements from my work, *Scenes From A Jade Terrace*, commissioned by pianist Jon Kimura Parker in 1988. My musical language was developed from an amalgamation of Eastern and Western influences, which is expressed in this piano solo. The first movement, "**Warrior**," is aggressive and virtuosic with difficult bravura passages that express the power of the artist as both a warrior and a poet. The middle section is contemplative and reveals the vulnerability of the artist in these dual roles.

"**Memories In An Ancient Garden**," an intensely internalized movement, instructs the pianist to play in a rubato style "as if intoxicated by the scent of a thousand blossoms." The mystery of the movement is further enhanced by colouristic playing inside the piano. It is as if the pianist is conjuring up ghosts of the distant past. I have found that this rather haunting movement has had a particularly profound effect on listeners. - *Alexina Louie*

Raphael Weinroth-Browne

Composer

Cellist, multi-instrumentalist, and composer, Raphael Weinroth-Browne is rapidly making a name for himself as an exceptionally versatile musician both in Canada and internationally. With his ground-breaking duo, *The Visit*, he has toured through France, Belgium, Germany, and the Czech Republic performing all original compositions. In addition to performing with *The Visit* and as a solo artist, he is also a member of acclaimed chamber trio *Musk Ox* and east-meets-west duo *Kamancello*.

Raphael Weinroth-Browne has played on over 70 full-length albums (including the Juno Award-winning *Woods 5: Grey Skies and Electric Light*). His work as a collaborator and session musician is extensive, ranging from

performances with Pauline Oliveros and Ernst Reijseger to studio recordings with Lawrence Gowan (Styx) and Norwegian metal pioneers Leprous.

In 2015, while finishing an Artist Diploma at The Glenn Gould School, he was commissioned by The Royal Conservatory of Music to compose and perform a new work for solo cello at the 21C Music Festival. He made a return appearance at 21C in 2016 with *The Visit*, premiering new works in Koerner Hall, and 2017 marks his third consecutive year being involved in the Festival.

Triumvirate

In 2016, VC2 approached me about composing a new work for cello duo as part of a “Beethoven project” they were launching. Their idea was to commission five pieces from five young Canadian composers based on the five Beethoven sonatas for cello and piano. *Triumvirate* was inspired by the 2nd Beethoven cello sonata (in G minor). My aim was to retain some of the primary motifs and melodic phrases of the original, while framing them in a new and more modern context. The piece builds largely on the predominant features of my own compositional style, including Middle Eastern modality and the rhythmic designs and aggression of metal. The title *Triumvirate* refers to the three distinct sections of the piece, which run continuously without pause. Each section is based around a melodic line from the G Minor Sonata; the opening is rapid and virtuosic, replete with turbulent angular riffs. The ensuing interlude draws on the motif from the beginning of the sonata, but instead of Beethoven’s Germanic classicism, the music takes on a meditative, minimalist quality, evoking liturgical chants. The final section of the piece is a relentless build-up, transforming an almost pure rendition of one of Beethoven’s melodies into a sonic onslaught that pays homage to Scandinavian black metal.

- Raphael Weinroth-Browne

Kotoka Suzuki

Composer

Kotoka Suzuki is a composer focusing on both multimedia and instrumental practices. She has produced several large-scale multimedia works, including spatial interactive audio-visual work for both concert and installation settings. Her work reflects on life, breath, and wind, and often conceives of sounds as physical form to be manipulated through the sculptural practice of composition.

Suzuki’s work has been featured internationally by performers such as Arditti String Quartet, eighth blackbird, Pacifica String Quartet, Continuum, Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra (Germany), and Earplay Ensemble, and at numerous venues and festivals such as Ultraschall, ISCM World Music Days, ZKM Media Museum, Inventionen, The Stone, ICMC, and Music at the Anthology. Awards she has received include DAAD Artist in Resident Berlin (Germany), Bourges First Prize in Multimedia, First Prize in Musica Nova (Czech Republic), Norton Stevens and North Shore fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, Howard Foundation Fellowship, and Robert Fleming Prize from Canada Council for the Arts. She has held residencies at MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Djerassi, Ucross, and Center for Arts and Media.

She taught at the University of Chicago and is currently an Assistant Professor at Arizona State University School of Music. Her works are published on Edition RZ, Albany Records, EMF Media, IMEB records, and Signpost Music. She is an Associate Composer at the Canadian Music Centre since 2001. For more information, visit www.kotokasuzuki.com.

Orison

This work is written as part of a series, “In Praise of Shadows,” which I began composing in 2015. It is inspired by Junichiro Tanizaki’s essay, “In Praise of Shadows” (1933), written at the birth of the modern technological era in imperial Japan. The essay describes the ways in which shadows and negative space are integral to traditional Japanese aesthetics in music, architecture, and food, right down to the design of everyday objects. As Tanizaki

explains, “We find beauty not in the thing itself but in the patterns of shadows, the light, and the darkness, that one thing against another creates ... Were it not for shadows, there would be no beauty.”

The first part of the sequence of “In Praise of Shadows” is for three paper players and electronics. Interested in the place of collective loss of the tangible in our modern life, it uses the analogue of the excessive illumination in Edison’s modern lighting and its effect on Japanese aesthetics and culture. Following this work, *Orison* is composed for three music box players and electronics. It is motivated by the voices of children during wartime, both from past and present, speaking and singing about hope and peace, as well as the sorrows arising from their personal experiences. These melodies, presented as empty spaces on the music score, reveal as they are fed through the music boxes.

Shimmer, Tree

In Memoriam Jonathan Harvey (2014)

This two-movement work is written in memory of the British composer Jonathan Harvey. He was a deeply spiritual man and beautifully sensitive to the details that surrounded him. I vividly recall a particular moment as we sat together by a window one sunny afternoon in California discussing music. In the middle of his sentence, he paused and looked outside the window, mesmerized by a tree as its leaves gently swayed in the wind. He then softly said, “Do you see how beautifully that tree is moving?” This piece depicts the image of this moving tree.

The second movement is loosely based on his work, *Bhakti*. A more direct quotation of this work, particularly from the seventh movement where the same tenor bell from his other work *Mortuos Plango* appears, is presented in the tape section of *Shimmer, Tree*.
- Kotoka Suzuki

Aaron Parker

Composer & electronics

Aaron Parker (b.1991) writes loosely defined instrumental and electronic music informed by a love of landscape, film (Jonas Mekas, Rose Lowder, Peter Bo Rappmund, Joshua Bonnetta), visual art (Anselm Keifer, Gerhard Richter, Ai Weiwei), and sound (Eliane Radigue, Rashad Becker, John Cage, Giuseppe Ielasi, Chris Watson, György Kurtág, Radiohead, and many others).

Upcoming in 2017 is a new piece for U.S.-based ensemble, Alarm Will Sound, a workshop and performance of *biakoulem* by Kokoro (Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra), performances and a record with Manchester-based multi-instrumentalist David Bainbridge, a new piece for toy piano and live electronics for Xenia Pestova, and a new LP of fractured Appalachian folk songs with vocalist Kathryn West.

2016 saw the release of his solo album *Storage* on SLIP imprint, the orchestral piece *Captured* on the LSO Live *Panufnik Legacies II* CD, and a solo violin work *eppitru* on RMN Classical. Recent pieces have been commissioned by the likes of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, Psappa and ddmmy series, and performances of his music have taken place across Europe, with broadcasts on *BBC Television and Radio*.

Mr. Parker completed a BMus in Composition at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, in 2013, studying with Gary Carpenter and Larry Goves. He has since held posts at a number of UK independent schools, teaching music and music technology at both primary and secondary levels, alongside freelance education and outreach work, including as a participating composer in Sound and Music’s 2011–12 ‘Adopt a Composer.’

warehouse

warehouse was written towards the end of 2012 for the then Manchester-based “ddmmy series,” which gave the first performance at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England, in December of that year. The piece was subsequently released on my solo album *Storage* via Berlin-based record label SLIP imprint in 2016, featuring the same musicians.

The performing forces for this piece are divided into eight separate groups: an amplified violin soloist, six spatially separated small ensembles, and an electronic soundtrack. As the music unfolds, the solo violinist gradually makes their way through 26 short loops, each separated by a silence. These loops act as aural cues which in turn prompt each of the six ensembles to either start or stop playing their material. Instead of a conductor, the music's tempo is indicated by a continuous pulsing electronic soundtrack, which binds the music together metrically. An element of indeterminacy is introduced by the fact that there is no prescribed order in which the violin may play the cues, meaning the ensembles will start and stop at different points with each realization of the piece, thus giving a variable quality to the music from performance to performance.

Perhaps unusually, the idea for the modular structure of the piece was prompted by the experience one summer of spending many hours packing, sorting, and stacking cargo in a large warehouse in Suffolk. I was fascinated by how, from day to day, the arrangement of hundreds of cardboard boxes in the warehouse would change, apparently altering the dimensions of the space, while in fact there would always be a similar number of cartons contained under the same roof. This piece is a rumination upon that experience, but instead uses musical rather than physical cargo.

I would like to express sincere thanks to The Royal Conservatory of Music, the students of The Glenn Gould School, Max Rubino, and to all those who have made it possible to mount this performance.

- Aaron Parker, March 2017

Geoffrey Conquer

Piano

Canadian pianist Geoffrey Conquer was born in Toronto into a musical family and began lessons at the age of six. After studying with Svetlana Gojevic for 10 years, he received the A.R.C.T. Diploma in Piano Performance from The Royal Conservatory of Music. Following this, he studied at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University for eight years with Marina Mdivani, a legendary Georgian pianist and pupil of Emil Gilels. Currently, he is in The Rebanks Family Fellowship and International Performance Residency Program at The Glenn Gould School, under the guidance of James Anagnoson, and he continued his studies at The Banff Centre with Pedja Muzijevic.

Among the numerous scholarships Mr. Conquer has been awarded by McGill University are the Mary Feher Prize, two Graduate Excellence Fellowships, and the prestigious Schulich Scholarship. He is the only two-time First Prize winner of the McGill Symphony Concerto Competition, a Second Prize winner at the 2015 Siegfried Weishaupt International Piano Competition in Germany, and a Laureate of the Canadian Music Competition. He is a grateful recipient of grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Williamson Foundation for Music. In Canada, he has performed in venues including Koerner Hall, Pollack Hall, Rolston Recital Hall, and the Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre. He has played in master classes for Martha Argerich, Walter Delahunt, Leon Fleisher, Daniel Pollack, Lily Dorfman, Boris Berman, John Perry, and Ronan O'Hora. His performances have been broadcast on Radio1 in Tbilisi, Georgia, and on CBC-McGill.

Morgan-Paige Melbourne

Piano

Pianist Morgan-Paige Melbourne began her musical journey at age three. She has competed in the Kiwanis Music Festivals of Guelph, Stratford, North York, Toronto, and Ottawa, receiving top awards, and she has performed concerts at Stratford and Guelph festivals. She is a four-time provincial finalist of the Ontario Music Festival Association, placing in the top six in 2013 in her category. In May 2010, she performed in Nassau, Bahamas, at her mother's former high school, Government High School, showcasing the influence of music in life. She has also

performed in London, ON, Toronto, and Brampton for Black History Month events, and is featured on the blog *AfriClassical*, written by William J. Zick, a website on African heritage in classical music.

Through private studies, Morgan-Paige Melbourne obtained two diplomas (ARCT and LRCM) from The Royal Conservatory of Music and, since November 2014, she is director and conductor of her church community choir. She has also worked as a volunteer librarian and on-call pianist for the Guelph Symphony Orchestra. She made her Guelph Symphony Orchestra debut on February 12, 2017, performing the first movement of Grieg's Piano Concerto in A Minor.

VC2

VC2 is an innovative cello duo able to captivate audiences through their performances of classical masterworks, unknown gems, and boundary-pushing music. Comprised of cellists Amahl Arulanandam and Bryan Holt, the Toronto-based duo presents artistically challenging yet accessible programs and has performed in venues ranging from intimate pubs to Roy Thompson Hall.

Formed in 2015, the pair met in 2008 while at the University of Toronto where they both studied under Shauna Rolston. They chose to continue their studies at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University, where they completed their master's degrees with Matt Haimovitz. As luck would have it, they both found themselves back in Toronto and a musical partnership was born.

Both Mr. Holt and Mr. Arulanandam wear many musical hats as orchestral, chamber, and session musicians in the Greater Toronto Area. They have appeared with organizations such as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, Soundstreams, Art of Time Ensemble, Continuum Contemporary Music, Pocket Concerts, New Music Concerts, Thin Edge New Music Collective, and Tapestry Opera. They are also both members of Haimovitz's ensemble, Uccello, and were semi-finalists in the 2015 Eckhardt-Gramatté competition. The duo has been featured at Ottawa Chamberfest, Ottawa New Music Creators, Ritornello Festival, and the Prairie Cello Institute.

Although new to the scene, VC2 seeks to take a place at the forefront of the Canadian chamber music world, bringing its unique brand of cello-fueled music coast-to-coast. In February 2018, VC2 will be embarking on a tour of the East Coast, presented by Debut Atlantic.