

Hear
Together
2021/22 Season



EDMONTON
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

ARRIVAL

Friday, November 19 • 7:30 PM



Cosette Justo Valdés
ESO Assistant Conductor
and Community Ambassador



Titilope Sonuga
Edmonton's Poet Laureate

Land Acknowledgement

The Winspear Centre and Edmonton Symphony Orchestra would like to acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 Territory, a traditional meeting ground, gathering place, and traveling route for many Indigenous Peoples. We honour and recognize the rich artistic, cultural, and musical traditions of the Cree, Nakota Sioux, Metis, Dene, Saulteaux, and the many more Indigenous communities that call this land we share, home.



ARRIVAL
November 19



FEATURED ARTISTS:



Cosette Justo Valdés
Conductor



Tatiana Warszynski
Violin



Laura Veeze
Violin



Titilope Sonuga (Edmonton's Poet Laureate)
Poetry

McLEOD	<i>Arrival</i> (2020) (ESO commission through the Young Composers Project)	(6')*
FUNG	<i>Baroque Melting</i> (2017)	(6')*
ROGERS	<i>The Shape of Things</i> (2006)	(7')*
AGÓCS	<i>Devotion</i> (2014)	(7')*
BOUCHARD	<i>Exquisite Fires</i> (1993)	(15')*
RAMÓN	<i>Petite Toccata pour orchestre</i> (2010)	(5')*
CLYNE	<i>Restless Oceans</i> (2018) (Canadian Premiere)	(4')*

Arrival (2020 ESO commission through the Young Composers Project)

Amelia McLeod

(b. Edmonton, 2002)

First performed: September 5, 2021 in Edmonton

This is the second time the ESO has presented this work

Amelia McLeod was born and raised in Edmonton. From a young age she played piano, and pursuing music as a career became a goal for her while attending J.H. Picard School. After exploring composition in high school, she became enamoured with it, which is what led her to apply to the Young Composers Project. Currently studying at the University of Alberta, she plans on majoring in Saxophone Performance while continuing to explore

composing.

Of her work *Arrival*, Ms. McLeod writes:

Arrival is what I imagine to be the feeling of a weight lifting off your shoulders, a beacon of hope and of comfort becoming clear. Starting with a slow and longing duet of the main theme between the horn and the trumpet, the piece soon becomes busy and excited, with multiple opposing melodies and textures. In composing *Arrival*, I felt as if the piece sounded like a journey full of building excitement and promise, and at the end of this journey comes the release, the relief, and the arrival. Writing this piece through the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear to me that I wanted the takeaway to be from it was the relief felt when the busyness and chaos is over, when the

weight has been lifted.

Baroque Melting (2017)

Vivian Fung

(b. Edmonton, 1975)

First performed: October 8, 2017, in San Jose, California

This is the ESO premiere of this work.

The orchestra has previously performed two works by Vivian Fung:

- *Flares* for Chamber Orchestra in September 1999
- *Aqua* in November 2014.

A scheduled performance of *A Child's Dream of Toys* in June 2020 was not presented.

Born in Edmonton, Vivian Fung began her composition

studies with Violet Archer, and received her doctorate from The Juilliard School in New York, where her mentors included David Diamond and Robert Beaser. She currently lives in California. Her unique talent for combining idiosyncratic textures and styles into large-scale works, reflecting her multicultural background, led NPR to label her “one of today’s most eclectic composers.” Naxos Canadian Classics’ recording of her *Violin Concerto [No.1], Piano Concerto “Dreamscapes,”* and *Glimpses* earned Fung the 2013 JUNO Award for Classical Composition of the Year (for the Violin Concerto).

Program note by the composer:

Imagine music “melting,” the aural equivalent to

Salvador Dali's melting clock in *Persistence of Memory*. This is the heart of *Baroque Melting*, in which I take familiar Baroque musical ideas and motives, recognizable elements accentuated by the harpsichord, contort them, bending pitches and phrases out of shape, and then twist them back into focus again. The apotheosis comes at the end, when a quotation of a Bach chorale, "Wär Gott Nicht mit uns diese Zeit" from *Cantata BWV 14*, is warped, fading the work out to end on a quiet and contemplative note.

Composer website: vivianfung.ca

***The Shape of Things* (2006)**

Erin Rogers

First performed: March 11, 2006 in New York

Tatiana Warszynski has previously recorded and performed this piece, most recently at the Art Gallery of Alberta this past August.

Based in New York City, Erin Rogers is a Canadian-American composer and saxophonist, dedicated to new and experimental music. Named a “rising star” (*Broadway World*), her “decidedly future oriented” music has been described as “whimsical, theatrical” (*Brooklyn Vegan*), “a wild ride” (*An Earful*), and “so complex, it’s primitive.” (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*). Her work explores the intersection of chamber music, sound alchemy, and theatre, moving freely between

acoustic and electronic worlds. Her solo album *Dawntreader* was released on Relative Pitch Records in December 2019. Rogers is a D'Addario Woodwinds Artist and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center Teaching Artist.

Of her work *The Shape of Things*, Ms. Rogers writes:

Expressive and passionate, *The Shape of Things* evolves over three lyrical sections, each building internally and successively. The title depicts a state of excited pondering, where thoughts race back and forth, alternating between logical and emotional, growing from small to large, drawing shapes and scenes of all colors and size, tracing sharp edges and corners, brushing soft, round curves. The climax occurs with the return of the opening theme pulsing

through the instrument.

Composer website: **erinmrogers.com**

Devotion (2014)

Kati Agócs

(b. Ontario, 1975)

First performed:

Original version premiered in 2014 in Boston.

String orchestra version premiered in 2019 in Oberlin, Ohio.

This is the ESO premiere and first performance of any music by Kati Agócs.

Born in 1975 in Canada of Hungarian and American parents, Kati Agócs earned Doctoral and Masters degrees from the Juilliard School, studying with Milton Babbitt, and has served on the composition faculty at the New England Conservatory in Boston since 2008. “One of the brightest stars in her generation of composers” (*Audiophile Audition*), Kati Agócs writes music that delivers visceral power and otherworldly lyricism with soulful directness. Her diverse and growing body of works has often been praised for its elegance and emotion. From folk music of an imaginary culture to volatile spectralism, polytextual vocal ensembles to large symphonic forces, the music of Kati Agócs embraces the 21st-century orchestra in all of its protean possibilities.

Program note by the composer:

Devotion means a state of being ardently, affectionately dedicated and loyal to a person or idea; the word, usually in plural, also connotes a private religious observance or prayer. This piece grew out of a desire to bring together these two impulses. I used very limited material, maintaining its essence through changes. In a spirit of luminosity and transparency the horn is the leading melodic voice, while the harp part is steadfast and brilliant, and integral partner in the colloquy. The string parts articulate the melodic material in different ways as they follow through its natural outgrowths, but they also play together with the unified disposition of a chorale (or anthem). *Devotion* was commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary

of the BSO Chamber Players. They premiered the version with string quintet (chamber version) in 2014 in Boston's Jordan Hall, with James Sommerville playing the horn part. The string orchestra version was premiered by the Oberlin Contemporary Ensemble in 2019, with Timothy Weiss conducting. *Devotion* is eight minutes in duration.

Composer website: katiagocs.com

Exquisite Fires (1993)

Linda Bouchard

(b. Montréal, 1957)

First performed: September 22, 1993, in Ottawa

This is the ESO premiere and first performance of any music by Linda Bouchard.

Born in Québec, Linda Bouchard has been an active composer, orchestrator, conductor, and producer for over thirty-five years. Winner of both Composer of the Year from the Conseil Québécois de la Culture and the Joseph S. Stauffer Prize from the Canada Council for the Arts in 1999, Bouchard received the Fleck Fellowship from The Banff Centre in fall 2015. In 1977, Bouchard went to the United States to study composition with Henry Brant. She lived in New York City from 1979 to 1990. In 2001, Bouchard was invited to participate at IRCAM's "Stage d'Informatique

Musicale” in Paris. Since then, she has been increasingly interested in how our traditional artistic practices are influenced by the integration of new technologies. In 2005, Bouchard founded New Experimental Music, Art and Production (NEXMAP), a non-profit arts organization that explores this evolving artistic landscape. She acted as artistic director until January 2016. For the past ten years Linda has been creating multimedia work while continuing to compose music for the concert hall.

Program note by the composer:

From the start I wanted to compose a suite of contrasting movements, short movements but whole, each one distinct and extreme in its character. My

goal was to play with orchestral colours in the most dramatic way. At the time I was reading *Medieval Love Myths* – there it was, a source of inspiration that allowed for excesses.

In nine sections with pauses after II, IV, V and VII, these movements are related in pairs (I-VIII), (II-IX), (III-VII), (IV-VI) with V being a combination of all the movements.

These stories were filled with magical, passionate images: “Knights worthy, brave and fierce”, “love potions”, the “Naked Sword” lying between the lovers, figures such as Majnun and Layla (Madman and Night) who through separation became “madder than a thousand Majnuns”. These stories created the

spirit of *Exquisite Fires*.

Composer website: **lindabouchard.com**

Editor's note:

The National Arts Centre Orchestra recorded music by Linda Bouchard, including *Exquisite Fires*, for the Marquis label in 1998. It is available on CD and several streaming services.

Petite Toccata pour orchestre (2010)

Evelin Ramón

(b. Santiago de Cuba, 1979)

First performed: October 16, 2010, in Montréal

This is the ESO premiere and first performance of any music by Evelin Ramón.

Evelin Ramón's background touches on different stages of development concerning the use of electronics, interpretation, improvisation, and above all the symbiosis that she establishes between popular music, scholarly music, and electronic music. Ms. Ramón was invited in 2019 to the Montréal Contemporary Music Laboratory (LMCM) where she gave lectures and workshops for participating composers and performers from several countries. In 2018, she was a finalist in the Artistic Personality category of the first edition of the Gala des Massons organized by the City of Terrebonne. Working with

electronics has become a means that allows Ms. Ramón the autonomy to carry out, compose, and manage the end result of many projects. For her, there are no longer any borders between contemporary electronic music and popular music, which gives her a great creative freedom which allows her to touch, according to the needs of each creation, the fused universes of popular music and contemporary and electronic music. She was co-host of the radio show Pulsar, dedicated to contemporary music, on CISM 89.3 FM. Her artistic work has been supported by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec and the Canada Council for the Arts.

Of her *Petite Toccata pour orchestre*, Ms. Ramón writes:

This work is born from the idea of wanting to honour women artists; in this case, many female musicians who have inspired me during my career. I could cite for example my first piano teacher in my hometown Santiago de Cuba, then many incredible women went through my life inspiring and supporting me. The most important for me, and the one to whom I dedicated this work – my mother, an artist also – who has always been the greatest force that accompanies me in life.

The music of Cuba, the country where I was born, has several influences. I have always been very curious and interested in Cuban folklore and popular music. Paradoxically, it was while being far from Cuba that I

start to read, analyze, and listen more to this inspiring music with its rhythm, energy, and liveliness. It was then that this work was strongly influenced by Cuban popular music, which represents a large part of my culture and my roots. To compose this work, the first idea I had was that I wanted above all things for the rhythmic aspect to be present and predominant. For that reason, this is a piece in which rhythm acts as the main articulation. It is made up of three parts. The elaboration and variation of the main theme are the common threads. This theme is made up of intervals connected to rhythmic combinations.

Composer website: **evelinramon.com**

Restless Oceans (2018)

Anna Clyne

(b. London, 1980)

First performed: January 22, 2019, in Davos, Switzerland

This is the Canadian premiere of the work.

The ESO has previously performed one other work by Anna Clyne, *This Midnight Hour*, in November 2019.

London-born Anna Clyne is a Grammy-nominated composer of acoustic and electro-acoustic music. Described as a “composer of uncommon gifts and unusual methods” in a *New York Times* profile and as “fearless” by NPR, Clyne is one of the most acclaimed and in-demand composers of her generation,

often embarking on collaborations with innovative choreographers, visual artists, filmmakers, and musicians. Clyne served as Composer-in-Residence for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, L'Orchestre national d'Île-de-France, and Berkeley Symphony. She is currently the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's Associate Composer through the 2021-2022 season and a mentor composer for Orchestra of St Luke's DeGaetano Composer Institute.

Program note by the composer:

I composed *Restless Oceans* for Marin Alsop and the Taki Concordia Orchestra for performance at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos. The piece received its world premiere at the

opening ceremony in 2019 where Marin Alsop was presented with the Forum's prestigious Crystal Award in recognition of her championship of diversity in music. This work draws inspiration and its title from *A Woman Speaks* – a poem by Audre Lorde and was composed with this particular all-women orchestra in mind. In addition to playing their instruments, the musicians are also called to use their voices in song and strong vocalizations, and their feet to stomp and to bring them to stand united at the end. My intention was to write a defiant piece that embraces the power of women. *Restless Oceans* is dedicated with thanks to Marin Alsop.

Composer website: annalcyne.com

A Woman Speaks - by Audre Lord

Moon marked and touched by sun
my magic is unwritten
but when the sea turns back
it will leave my shape behind.
I seek no favor
untouched by blood
unrelenting as the curse of love
permanent as my errors
or my pride
I do not mix
love with pity
nor hate with scorn
and if you would know me
look into the entrails of Uranus

where the restless oceans pound.

I do not dwell

within my birth nor my divinities

who am ageless and half-grown

and still seeking

my sisters

witches in Dahomey

wear me inside their coiled cloths

as our mother did

mourning.

I have been woman

for a long time

eware my smile

I am treacherous with old magic

and the noon's new fury

with all your wide futures

promised
I am
woman
and not white.

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with thanks.
Edited by D.T. Baker.

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