

## The Edmonton Symphony Orchestra Celebrates Indigenous Prairie Composers with a New Music Series Concert

### For immediate release

**Edmonton, AB (April 14, 2023)** – Indigenous composers take centre stage with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra (ESO) New Music concert on April 20th. Love is a Battle Field will showcase six ESO premieres by living composers, braiding traditional and contemporary works together at the Winspear Centre.

Hosted by JUNO Award-nominated artist Cris Derksen (Treaty 8), this New Music concert offers insight into a rich heritage of storytelling transformed into unique orchestral sonorities. Derksen, who is a composer, cellist, and vocalist, will make her ESO debut alongside her wife, Rebecca Benson. Resident Conductor Cosette Justo Valdés will lead a program of works by Indigenous composers inspired by the sky, nature, home, love, magic, and spirituality.

Derksen, whose father's family represents a long line of chiefs from North Tall Cree Reserve, is delighted that the program she helped create is made up of entirely of composers from Canada. The concert features ESO premieres from Derksen, as well as award-winning composers Sonny-Ray Day Rider, Jessica McMann, and Andrew Balfour.

"That's super important to me to continue to open the doors for Indigenous folks in the classical field," says Derksen.

"It's exciting to explore new and celebrated living composers. We have a unique chance to meet these composers and enjoy their work intimately in the acoustically splendid setting of the Winspear Centre," says Justo Valdés. "We are honoured to continue providing programming that supports our commitment to Indigenous artists and audiences."

Adult tickets start at \$25, plus fees. Tickets are available by calling the Winspear Box Office at 780-428-1414 or visiting: <https://bit.ly/40Eohyw>

About Cris Derksen: <https://www.crisderksen.com/about>

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### About the Winspear | Edmonton Symphony Orchestra | Tommy Banks Centre

In its 71st year, the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra has taken its place as one of Canada's foremost orchestral ensembles. Its current roster includes musicians from Canada and around the world performing a wide-ranging repertoire, from great classical masterworks to Hollywood scores to new works. The orchestra is the resident artistic ensemble, the "home team," of the Winspear Centre, among the best acoustic concert halls in North America. The Tommy Banks Centre for Musical Creativity launched in 2013 delivering musical discovery programs that transform lives.

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