



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Sophie Lanthier, flute

DMA Recital 2

Rachael Kerr, piano

Clara Nguyen-Tran, viola

Charlene Chin, harp

This recital is in partial fulfilment of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance.
Sophie Lanthier is a student of Leslie Newman.

Friday, May 31, 2024 at 12:30 pm | Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park

PROGRAM

Aria for Flute and Piano, Op. 27 (1977)

Jacques Hétu (1938-2010)

Trio for Flute, Viola, and Harp (2011)

R. Murray Schafer (1933-2021)

Freely Flowing
Slowly, Calmly
Rhythmic

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures. Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

Wild Riot of the Shaman's Dreams (1995)

Michael Colgrass (1932-2019)

INTERMISSION

Presto II im alten Styl for Flute and Piano, E. 129 (1951)

Sophie Carmen Eckhardt-Gramatté (1899-1974)

Plainsong (1977)

Robert Aitken (1939)

Sonata for Flute and Piano (1997)

Heather Schmidt (1974)

Allegro

Lento e mesto

Allegro energico

BIOGRAPHY

Sophie Lanthier is a Toronto-based freelance flutist with a devoted interest in both contemporary and orchestral music. She regularly performs with several orchestras across Southern Ontario, including the Niagara Symphony Orchestra, Oakville Symphony Orchestra, and Ontario Philharmonic. As a contemporary musician, Lanthier is a member of the Association of Canadian Women Composers and has performed and premiered works with New Music Concerts as both a soloist and chamber musician. As a soloist, she has appeared with the Oakville Symphony Orchestra, Northwestern University Campus Philharmonic, and the Northwestern University Baroque Ensemble. In 2025, she will perform Vivaldi's Piccolo Concerto in C major, RV 443, with the Ontario Philharmonic.

Lanthier currently attends the University of Toronto as a Doctor of Musical Arts student, studying with Leslie Newman. She holds a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University, an Artist Diploma from the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music, and a Bachelor of Music degree in Flute Performance with Honours from the University of Toronto. Her previous teachers include Nora Shulman, Susan Hoepfner, and John Thorne.

PROGRAM NOTES

This recital celebrates flute repertoire by some of the most influential Canadian composers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. I have selected pieces that represent several of the diverse compositional styles that make up the vast Canadian

musical landscape. By showcasing the imaginative and versatile ways in which these selected composers use the flute, I hope to further shed light on the richness of Canadian flute repertoire.

Aria for Flute and Piano, Op. 27 – Jacques Hétu

Québécois composer Jacques Hétu's *Aria for Flute and Piano, Op. 27* is a single-movement piece that demonstrates Hétu's compositional style of combining twentieth-century atonality and neo-romantic lyricism. It was commissioned by the Canadian Music Competition in 1977 as a breath-control test for flutists, especially due to its expansive melodic lines and long, sustained notes. This piece is an elaboration on a flute theme found in the second movement of Hétu's *Concerto for Violin, Piano, and String Orchestra*.

It opens with a striking piano entrance and trill, from which the flute emerges with two brief yet explosive cadenzas. These lead into a quieter, contrasting section, which features steady sixteenth notes in the piano and a haunting melody in the flute that challenges the performer's breath-control and timbral control. The melody ascends in both dynamic and register and transitions into a dramatic middle section that recalls the opening. The piece concludes with another lyrical section, maintaining tension through to the very end with a dissonant final chord of F-sharp and C-sharp in the outer voices of the piano, over top of which the flute sustains a G.

Trio for Flute, Viola, and Harp – R. Murray Schafer

A native of Sarnia, Ontario, R. Murray Schafer is celebrated for his work on soundscapes, advocacy for "acoustic ecology," and the subsequent influence his love of nature has on his compositions. Though no explicit references to nature are made in his *Trio for Flute, Viola, and Harp*, Schafer's use of lush harmonies, cascading arpeggios, a sicilienne-style rhythmic motif, and the ebb-and-flow of rubato evoke the natural flow of water and wind.

The first movement, aptly titled "Freely Flowing," features sweeping slurred figures that, though very precisely written, give this movement an improvisatory feeling. Throughout this movement, Schafer pairs the flute and viola in rhythm and often in contrast to the harp, clearly establishing the sicilienne motif. Though this movement makes use of harmonic tension and chromaticism, Schafer frequently returns to major tonality, creating a lingering sense of warmth and optimism by concluding in C major. The second movement, "Slowly; Calmly," utilizes the darker timbre of the alto flute and contrasts the first movement's sweeping optimism with sustained, swelling melodic lines. The sicilienne motif makes a reappearance, showcasing Schafer's use of cyclical elements to tie together the piece as a whole. The bubbly, lyrical nature of the first two movements gives way to the final movement, "Rhythmic," in which the energetic and sharply articulated lines navigate frequently-changing metres. This movement is grounded in minor tonality, beginning and ending in C minor.

This piece was commissioned and premiered in 2011 by Trio Verlaine, made up of flutist Lorna McGhee, violist David Harding, and harpist Heidi Krutzen.

Wild Riot of the Shaman's Dreams – Michael Colgrass

Although he was born in Illinois, Pulitzer Prize-winner Michael Colgrass spent the vast majority of his life fostering a successful composition career in Toronto. He spent a short period of his life living with an Inuit family in Baffin Island, where he found inspiration for much of his music. Among his many collaborators is flutist Marina Piccinini, to whom *Wild Riot of the Shaman's Dreams* is dedicated.

Inspired by a chapter in Farley Mowat's book, *People of the Deer*, Colgrass explores the versatility of the solo flute—depicting human sounds such as panting, growling, crying, and muttering—to bring to life the story of an Ihalmiut shaman who lived in the Arctic tundra of northern Manitoba. The shaman, Kakumee, is described as a frightening and devious creature with eyes that “glistened out from their crevices as the black eyes of great spiders shine from their shadowed caves under rocks.”

Wild Riot of the Shaman's Dreams explores the full dynamic, timbral, and registral range of the flute. He utilizes extended techniques such as pitch bending, flutter-tonguing, timbral trills, and what he calls the “death rattle”: the performer sings a deep groan in the throat while playing rapid notes to project a full, unearthly sound. The “wild” outbursts in this piece—marked “dark, nasty”—are contrasted by sections with the (obviously problematic) marking, “Anglo-American and pure,” intended to further offset the abrasive character of Kakumee.

Presto II im alten Styl for Flute and Piano, E. 129 – Sophie Carmen Eckhardt-Gramatté

S.C Eckhardt-Gramatté was a Russian-born, Winnipeg-based Canadian violinist, pianist, and composer. A predominantly self-taught composer, much of her music is grounded in a deep admiration for the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. This is especially apparent in her flute and piano piece, *Presto II im alten Styl*—translating to “in olden style”—which adopts a neo-baroque style with nineteenth-century chromaticism.

The rhythmic and melodic contours of this piece are reminiscent of a typical Baroque allegro; at times, the music indeed sounds like that of a Baroque composer, with simple harmonic language and perfect cadences. However, Eckhardt-Gramatté increases the chromaticism and dissonance as the piece unfolds, along with strong accents and technical flourishes more reminiscent of twentieth century compositional style. This piece takes an ABA form, with the reprise of the A section re-establishing the home key of G major. It concludes with a coda, marked *Allargando*, and a simple Baroque cadence.

This piece is a revised version of Eckhardt-Gramatté's *Presto I*, E. 89, which is based on the fourth movement of her Suite for Violin Solo No. 1, E. 41.

Plainsong – Robert Aitken

Robert Aitken is a Toronto-based flutist-composer and one of the most influential figures in Canadian contemporary music, having received the Order of Canada in 1993 and the

National Flute Association Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003. One of his most famous contributions to the flute repertoire is his piece for solo flute, *Plainsong*.

Plainsong is inspired by the parallel fourths and fifths found in Medieval organum, which he depicts by incorporating independent vocal and flute lines, which are to be executed simultaneously by the performer. This creates both homophonic and contrapuntal textures that are especially unique in solo wind instrument repertoire. He employs the flute's ability to sound two notes an octave apart through careful control of the air column, which is demonstrated in the opening of the piece. Additional unconventional techniques include timbral trills, multiphonics, key clicks, percussive articulation, and excessive wind pressure to create a distorted sound. Aitken incorporates twelve-tone pitch controls twice: first by introducing the twelve pitches slowly over several phrases, and secondly by exposing the twelve pitch classes in a flourish. There are no traditional cadences, nor diatonic harmony, throughout this piece; rather, phrases are often concluded with fermatas and tapers.

Sonata for Flute and Piano – Heather Schmidt

Born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, Heather Schmidt is celebrated as both a virtuoso pianist and an acclaimed composer of concert and film music. Her Sonata for Flute and Piano was commissioned in 1997 by the Canada Council for the Arts, for performance by flutist Michelle Cheramy, to whom the piece is also dedicated. Schmidt's background as a concert pianist is evident throughout this piece, as she utilizes virtuosic writing that features the piano as a solo instrument as much as she does the flute.

The first movement, "Allegro," begins with a dramatic arpeggiated flourish of A, B-flat, and E-flat in the piano. The intervals of a tritone and semitone become motivic material that recurs throughout the entirety of the sonata. These intervals, coupled with the rumbling piano part and high tessitura of the flute part, create ongoing tension and drama. The second theme provides a brief reprieve from the textural density of the previous material, as the flute presents an angular, jaunty melody that continues to present the motivic intervals in its structure. The second movement, "Lento e mesto," sets a far more still and contemplative mood, beginning with a legato solo flute line in the lower register. This movement features pitch bends in the flute part, evoking a sighing that adds to the somber nature of the music. However, it gradually builds in intensity, both dynamically and texturally, resembling the tension and drive of the first movement. The third and final movement, "Allegro energico," once again reimagines the motivic intervals in a fiery 12/8 metre. Following the introduction of the main themes, the piano launches into an extensive solo before giving way to a flute cadenza. The piece concludes with a callback to the first theme, coming to a dramatic close in the highest register of the flute.