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CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN MUSIC COMPOSITION

GALA CONCERT

FEATURING PREMIERES BY LAUREATES
IMAN HABIBI, AHARON HARLAP & RITA UEDA

ORCHESTRE MÉTROPOLITAIN
ALEXANDRE BLOCH, CONDUCTOR

2022
**AZRIELI
MUSIC
PRIZES**

OCTOBER **20** 7:30 P.M. (EDT)

MAISON SYMPHONIQUE DE MONTRÉAL

LIVESTREAM ON **MEDICI TV**

The Azrieli Foundation
opens doors for artists by
supporting organizations
that discover, elevate and
amplify their voices.



Photo by Antoine Salto

With a firm belief that everyone
has a contribution to make, the
Azrieli Foundation has been
opening doors, breaking ground
and nurturing networks for more
than 30 years. The Foundation
funds institutions and operates
programs in Canada and Israel.



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A Welcome Message from

SHARON AZRIELI

We are thrilled to welcome you back to Maison symphonique for our fourth Azrieli Music Prizes Gala Concert! It's a joy to celebrate with so many of you in person this year, as well as with all our friends joining us via livestream on Medici TV. It's wonderful to witness how AMP has grown into a truly international endeavour.

What a remarkable journey our competition has taken over the past two years. We persevered through the pandemic to celebrate our excellent 2020 Laureates via our first livestream event, after which we helped to support nearly a dozen other performances of past Laureates' works through our Performance Fund. Following the broadly enjoyed 2020 AMP Virtual Gala (58,000 views in 65 countries!) we made our critically acclaimed NYC debut with the virtuoso Talea Ensemble, directed by the amazing Maestro James Baker. This was followed by an Israel debut in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, where we had the honour of being broadcast nationally on Kan Kol Hamusica.

In a remarkable reception for our inaugural Commission for Canadian Music, composer Keiko Devaux took home the 2022 JUNO Award for Classical Composition of the Year. You can hear her *Arras* on our third album, *New Jewish Music Vol. 3*, with Analekta. In addition, in 2021, we were one of only three competitions to be invited and inducted into the World Federation of International Music Competitions. Both events mark major milestones for AMP and for the Azrieli Foundation.

We have truly arrived on the international stage and we couldn't be more proud!

We are delighted to be back in Montréal, to appreciate the artistry, creativity and musical excellence of our 2022 Laureates: Iman Habibi, Aharon Harlap and Rita Ueda. In the best of times, music creation is an act that demands all human faculties – intellect, craft and emotion. In recent times, our composers have been inspired to dig deep. They have responded not only to our questions of what Jewish and Canadian music is but have also been inspired to relate their work to greater questions of the human condition.

In 2024, for AMP's tenth anniversary, we will add a fourth and final addition to our prize roster: The Azrieli Commission for International Music. This prize will invite composers worldwide to engage with the richness of their chosen cultural heritage. It will also advance AMP's objective of building greater intercultural understanding through music. Stay tuned for more details.

This year, Aharon, Iman and Rita have united us across eras, cultures and environments with their compositions. They have musically amplified their stories and traditions in a way that will resonate with us all. I feel privileged to play a part in bringing their work to life tonight.

How do we arrive at an evening like this? It starts with guidance from outstanding individuals on

our Juries and Advisory Council, both past and present. We are privileged to have among us jurors Barbara Assiginaak, Gisèle Ben-Dor, Brian Current, Mary Ingraham, Neil Levin, Steven Mercurio, Betty Olivero, David Pay, Ana Sokolović and Andrew Staniland. I am also delighted to introduce to you our new AMP International jurors Dai Fujikura, Jonathan Goldman, Tania Léon and Samy Moussa. I also send gratitude to our Council members Ana Sokolović, Sylvia L'Écuyer, CM, Peter Herrndorf, CC, O.Ont, Jonathan Goldman and Barbara Seal, CM. Many thanks to you all. Our hearts especially go out to the families of Jonathan Goldman, Barbara Seal-Shiveck and Ardyth Brott for their very sad losses suffered during this past year.

We are very grateful to have brilliant and strong performance partners in Orchestre Métropolitain, Maestro Alexandre Bloch and our wonderful soloists Sepideh Raissadat, Naomi Sato and Zhongxi Wu. I'd like to thank them in advance for tonight's performances. I would also like to thank the board and staff of the Azrieli Foundation for their ongoing support, especially Jason van Eyk and Nadine Haddad, and our other partners 8VA, Cory Garfinkle, Haryco and ProdCan. AMP wouldn't excel without you.

I wish you all a beautiful and inspiring concert.

SHARON AZRIELI, D.Mus, CQ

A Message from

NAOMI AZRIELI

On behalf of the board and staff of the Azrieli Foundation, I thank you for attending the 2022 Azrieli Music Prizes Gala Concert – our first in-person gala in four years.

When COVID-19 entered our lives in 2020, it affected music communities around the world. Live concerts were suspended, venues closed, and performers were left disconnected – from audiences and from one another. People everywhere felt music's absence.

Organizations had to spring into action to adapt to the new normal. Music ensembles invested in innovative technology, orchestras streamed content and musicians learned how to connect online. At the Azrieli Foundation, we proudly supported many in the industry as they responded to the uncertainty around them.

Tonight, we acknowledge the challenging road

our winning composers took to get here. These laureates – our most diverse group to date – not only honour the Canadian and Jewish music of the past, they redefine what it means to make music during these extraordinary times.

I would like to thank my sister, Dr. Sharon Azrieli, CQ, who conceived of these prizes, and Jason van Eyk, the Manager of Music, Arts & Culture Initiatives. Along with the Juries and Advisory Council, they imbue the Azrieli Music Prizes with great skill, passion and inspiration.

Congratulations to tonight's laureates. I wish you success with your new works that are sure to bring joy to so many.

NAOMI AZRIELI, D.Phil, OC

Chair and CEO
The Azrieli Foundation



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A Word from

ORCHESTRE MÉTROPOLITAIN

© Simon Couturier



Created by the Azrieli Foundation a mere eight years ago, the Azrieli Music Prizes provide proof of the effervescence and creativity to be found in the new concert music field. Several composers have seen the fruit of their labour not just rewarded, but also celebrated at the Gala Concerts, including this evening's event – where new music comes to life with panache in front of a large and receptive audience.

It is therefore with great pride and admiration that the Orchestre Métropolitain hails and takes part in the 2022 Azrieli Music Prizes Gala Concert, which this year is devoted to orchestral music with soloists. For the occasion, OM is delighted to welcome again conductor Alexandre Bloch, the music director of the Orchestre National de Lille, widely admired for his musicality, enthusiasm and energy.

This evening's concert will take you on a musical voyage across eras and cultures, both Jewish and Canadian, in a program that explores current social issues through the prism of the vibrant creativity of today's composers. In their own ways and "words," the three Laureates' works featured in tonight's concert explores Judeo-Persian poetry and the cultural music of our constantly evolving country, inviting you to experience an array of emotions, from despair to joy.

Congratulations to these three recipients, whose talent, vision and commitment to ever more inclusive music – which represents so well our own values – are celebrated this evening!

And many thanks to you, dear audience members, for joining us this evening. I wish you an excellent concert.

JEAN R. DUPRÉ
President and CEO
Orchestre Métropolitain

Discover the recordings of the works composed by the Azrieli Music Prize laureates!

NEW JEWISH MUSIC
VOL. 1, 2 & 3.

Available at analekta.com and on all streaming platforms.

Winner of the JUNO Award for Classical Composition of the Year at the JUNO Awards of 2022 for *Arras* by Keiko Devaux!



PROGRAMME

Orchestre Métropolitain
Alexandre Bloch • CONDUCTOR

IMAN HABIBI

Shāhīn-nāmeḥ, for voice and orchestra

Sepideh Raissadat • VOICE & SETAR

- I. Prelude (In Susa)
 - II. Shāhīn's Prologue
 - III. The Dawn of Esther
 - IV. Mordecai's Prayer
 - V. Postlude
-



AHARON HARLAP

*Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee,
O Lord*, for soprano and orchestra

Sharon Azrieli • SOPRANO

- I. Psalm 130
 - II. Psalms 120 and 23
 - III. Psalm 121
 - IV. Psalm 112
 - V. Psalm 98
-



RITA UEDA

Birds Calling...from the Canada in You,
for shō, suona/sheng and orchestra

Naomi Sato • SHŌ

Zhongxi Wu • SUONA & SHENG

- I. Phoenix Flies Over the Ocean of Dreams
- II. Birds Canada
- III. Danger!
- IV. From the Canada in You





SHĀHĪN- NĀMEH

IMAN HABIBI

- I. Prelude (In Susa)
- II. Shāhīn's Prologue
- III. The Dawn of Esther
- IV. Mordecai's Prayer
- V. Postlude

About his *Shāhīn-nāmeḥ*, the composer writes:

Shāhīn-nāmeḥ derives its poetry from *Ardashir-nāmah* (the Book of Ardashir) by the Judeo-Persian poet Shahin Shirazi, and is a commentary on the tale of Queen Esther, connecting it with mythical characters from Ferdowsi's monumental epic *Shahnameh* (The Book of Kings). The poems include the accounts of the Persian King Xerxes I (referred to in the book as Ardashir), Mordecai and Queen Esther, and their saving of the Jewish populace from a plotted genocide by Haman.

One of the most prominent Persian poets of the fourteenth century, Shahin is often referred to by the honorific title "Mowlānā," a title also attributed to Rumi. His poetry was originally written in Persian, using the Judeo-Persian script. While it is celebrated among the Judeo-Persian community, much of this poetry has yet to be transcribed to the contemporary Persian script, thus making it inaccessible and mostly unknown to Iranians today. To be able to read this poetry, I spent several months teaching myself to read the Judeo-Persian script.

My song-cycle, based on Shahin's work, is set in Persian and performed by a Persian classical soloist and a Western orchestra. Each song within the set is dramatic and sweeping, following the epic nature of Shahin's poetry. And while each song can stand on its own, they connect to form a cohesive narrative, and share certain thematic elements with one another.

The music alternates between strictly metric passages, and freer ones that allow the soloist to improvise. Apart from its often improvisatory nature, Persian music makes use of intervals that do not exist within the Western 12-tone system. My challenge as a composer has been to bring the two musical systems together in a sensitive way. The result, I hope, will be an exciting marriage of different cultural and musical languages.

It is also my hope that this piece not only brings much-deserved attention to the poetry of Shahin, but that it also shows the close affinity that has existed historically between Persians and Jews, dating back to the time of Xerxes I in sixth century B.C.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS HAVE I CRIED UNTO THEE, O LORD

AHARON HARLAP

The 25-minute song cycle *Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord* was written in 2008. It was premiered by the Israel Sinfonietta Beer-Sheva on October 17, 2009, with soprano soloist Sharon Rostorf-Zamir and conducted by Doron Salomon. The work is dedicated “in deep gratitude” to the composer’s friend Alan Septimus, who commissioned it. The composer writes:

“Through the ages, from the time of King David until the present day, the Psalms have been a source of solace and comfort to the Jewish people. I have chosen six of these Psalms that deal with the belief in God’s strength to overcome all adversity and to protect us in times of need. They are sung by the soprano soloist in the original Hebrew.”

I. “Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord” (Psalm 130). The orchestra sets the mood of despair, something akin to a funeral dirge. The movement ends as it began, in a mood of despair, though along the way there are moments of hope for God’s deliverance.

- I. Psalm 130
- II. Psalms 120 and 23
- III. Psalm 121
- IV. Psalm 112
- V. Psalm 98

II. “In my distress, I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me” (Psalm 120). Once again, the character of the Psalm is one of despair. The dramatic opening passage is followed by a six-note motif that represents the threat of the enemy. This motif culminates in David’s cry of distress and frustration by the soprano in her highest register. Immediately following comes the pastoral setting of Psalm 23, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,” wherein the speaker is confident that God’s strength will enable him to overcome his enemy, even amid great danger. The repetitive accompaniment underscores the constant, determined faith the believer has in God. The movement ends quietly, indicative of peace and serenity in God’s ways.

III. “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills” (Psalm 121). The poet feels secure in God’s ways, reflected in the opening horn motif. The believer knows that he will never be abandoned and will be guarded against evil throughout his days. The coda is played by the orchestra alone, reiterating the quiet reverence for God and the confidence He instills. The horn motif returns.

IV. “Halleluyah” (Psalm 112). Here the speaker praises the Lord, declaring that the righteous man and his seed shall be blessed, and that their deeds will be remembered long after they are gone. The wicked shall bear witness and their jealousy shall fade away. Each time the word “Halleluyah” is sung, it appears in a different tonality and with more intensity, attesting to the believer’s happiness in the commandments given to him by God.

V. “Sing unto the Lord a new song” (Psalm 98). Various motifs from different sections of the cycle return to give this movement a feeling of unity and coherence. The emotional arc passes through despair (using the motif from the first movement) to hope and onto the final celebration of God’s works, with complete and utter confidence in His power and strength. This is the “new song” we sing unto the Lord.



BIRDS CALLING... FROM THE CANADA IN YOU

RITA UEDA

Birds Calling ... from the Canada in You is a 25-minute concerto for traditional Chinese and Japanese instruments with modern orchestra. The work incorporates the calls from some 450 species of Canadian birds.

"Growing up in Canada," the composer writes, "I have always felt that the birdsongs incorporated into or evoked in traditional Western music do not sound like any birds I know. Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, *Respighi's Gli Ucelli* (The Birds) and Messiaen's *Oiseaux exotiques*, to name a few, are pieces by composers I deeply respect, but they do not include birds from our Canadian soundscape. There are next to no works about our blue jays, snowy owls, gyrfalcons or Anna's hummingbirds. *Birds Calling ...* is a uniquely Canadian musical bird call experience."

It is also an exploration of the complex richness and evolution of bird calls. For example, each musician in the orchestra has a musico-poetic role equivalent to those of the soloists, using techniques such as jet whistles (flute), double reed crowing (oboes, bassoons) and lip glissandos (brass).

Birds Calling ... has a unique structure. A rich

- I. Phoenix Flies Over
the Ocean of Dreams
- II. Birds Canada
- III. Danger!
- IV. From the Canada in You

cluster of individual bird calls combines into a collective mass of sound. This sound mass gradually dissolves until all that is left is a solo line that has been there all the time, previously unnoticed. The conductor, rather than just a time-keeper, becomes the manager of an ever-shifting texture. The entire performance space is utilized, with selected instrumentalists seated throughout the audience. "The aim," says Rita, "is to create an immersive environment that vividly portrays the Canadian natural soundscape."

Rita goes on to say that "it is important to me that any work I compose about Canada is represented by its diversity and multiculturalism. Since 2014, I have been interested in intercultural music – a musical genre that incorporates musicians from a variety of cultures to create a new transcultural identity without the loss of each member's origins. *Birds Calling ...* incorporates Japanese, Chinese and Western musical traditions using the unique soundscape of Canadian birds."

Writing a European-style orchestral score in Western notation would be insensitive to the intercultural nature of the instrumentation. For this reason, *Birds Calling...* represents a score

utilizing both Asian (Japanese and Chinese) and Western musical systems.

Rita chose the solo instruments to represent Japan and its historical association with China, an association that continues to this day. She sees this pairing of the Japanese shō (an instrument consisting of seventeen bamboo pipes, each with a metal reed fitted to its base and somewhat smaller than the Chinese sheng from which it is descended) and the Chinese suona (a double-reed instrument with a horn) as a "point of communication and cooperation." The suona represents "my ten-plus years working in collaboration with musicians from Vancouver's Chinese-Canadian community."

The suona, explains Rita, "is a Chinese instrument with a long history of incorporating birdsong. Suona players are traditionally trained to play birdcalls by listening to and imitating real songbirds in nature. As for the shō, this represents the phoenix, the mythical bird that the suona cannot model from nature. In addition, in the traditional Japanese court drama called gagaku, the shō represents the space between heaven and earth, creating a fitting environment for birds in flight."



IMAN HABIBI

Iman Habibi was born in Tehran, immigrated to Canada in 2003 and now lives in Toronto. Following early training in his native Iran, Habibi went on to earn his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of British Columbia, working with Dorothy Chang, Jeffrey Ryan and Stephen Chatman, and his doctorate at the University of Michigan under the mentorship of Evan Chambers, Michael Daugherty and Bright Sheng.

Early in his career, Iman has received commissions from leading institutions such as the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Toronto Symphony. His orchestral work *Jeder Baum spricht* (Every Tree Speaks), a reflection on catastrophic climate change, was selected by conductor Yannick Nézet-Seguin for a performance by the Philadelphia Orchestra on October 6, 2021, marking the reopening of Carnegie Hall after its closure for more than a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nézet-Seguin has championed the work in several other live and virtual performances since its premiere in March 2020. *Jeder Baum spricht* has also been programmed by the major orchestras of Boston, New York, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Toronto, Saskatoon and Winnipeg.

Beyond these commissions and performances, Iman's music has been programmed by the Marilyn Horne Foundation, the Tanglewood Music Festival, the Canadian Opera Company, Tapestry Opera (Toronto), the New York Festival of Song, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Vox Novus (New York), the Atlantic Music Festival (Maine) and many other presenters and venues.

In addition to winning the 2022 Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music, Iman has received numerous other awards. These include First Prize at the 2011 and 2012 SOCAN Foundation Awards, the International Composers' Award at the Esoterics' POLYPHONOS Choral Composition Competition (2012) and the Vancouver Mayor's Arts Awards for Emerging Artist in Music (2011).

Iman Habibi is also a pianist of note. In 2010, he and his wife Deborah Grimmert formed Piano Pinnacle, a duo which has won first prize at the United States International Duo Piano Competition and second prize at the Northwest International Piano Ensemble Competition. He has also given the premieres of his own *Piano Concerto No. 1* and his concerto for two pianos, *Amesha Spenta*.

imanhabibi.com



© Deborah Grimmert

AHARON HARLAP

Aharon Harlap is one of Israel's most prominent composers and conductors. Born in Canada in 1941, he grew up in Winnipeg, received degrees in both music and mathematics from the University of Manitoba, later studied composition at the Royal College of Music in London (England) with Peter Racine Fricker, and in 1964 immigrated to Israel, where he still lives today. In Israel, Aharon furthered his studies in composition with Oedoen Partos, and in conducting with Gary Bertini. Additionally, he studied conducting with the renowned Hans Swarovsky in Vienna.

As a conductor, Aharon has led many orchestras and operatic performances throughout North America and Europe, as well as with all the important orchestras in Israel. As an adjudicator, he has appeared regularly at the biannual World Choir Games beginning in 2002 in Busan (South Korea) and continuing to Xiamen and Shaoxing (China), Bremen (Germany), Graz (Austria), Riga (Estonia), Sochi (Russia), Cincinnati (U.S.) and Tshwane (South Africa).

Aharon's catalogue includes two operas, four piano concertos, two clarinet concertos, three symphonies and numerous song cycles, oratorios and choral works. He is closely identified with music derived from Biblical sources. Among these are *Jephtha's Daughter*, *David and Goliath*, *Cain and Abel*, *David and Absalom* and *The Sacrifice of Isaac*. His oratorio *Fire and the Mountains* won a prize in 1979 in a competition on the subject of the Holocaust and Rebirth. Among Aharon's many other prizes and awards are the Prime Minister's Prize for composition in 1999, and the Life Achievement Award in 2008 for his contribution to Israel as a composer, conductor and pedagogue.

Aharon was an Associate Professor at the Rubin Academy of Music (now the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance), where he taught both conducting and composition, and was head of the Opera Department from 1976 to 2018.

aharonharlap.com



© Hadassah Harlap

RITA UEDA

Vancouver-based, Canadian composer Rita Ueda holds a bachelor's degree in music from Simon Fraser University, where she studied with Rudolf Komorous and Rodney Sharman, and an MFA in Composition from the California Institute of the Arts, where she studied with Wadada Leo Smith and David Rosenboom. Short-term studies were pursued with Earle Brown, James Tenney and Lou Harrison, prior to pursuing a Doctorate in Composition at Durham University in England, where she is currently working with Richard Rijnvos and James Weeks.

Rita is a composer of orchestral, operatic and choral works that reflect today's ever-shifting interactions between cultures in flux. Ever since her 2010 orchestral debut with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (*forty years of snowfall will not heal an ancient forest*), she has been composing works that aim to stimulate important and urgent conversations around the world. Her recent premieres include collaborations with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra,

Budapest MAV Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Prague Modern, Turning Point Ensemble (Vancouver), Little Giant Chinese Chamber Orchestra (Taipei) and the SYC Ensemble Singers (Singapore). Her works have been presented at the Montréal Nouvelle Musique Festival, the Amsterdam Uitmarkt Festival, the West Coast New Music Festival (Fukuoka), the Prague Conempuls Festival and the Vancouver Intercultural Orchestra Global Soundscapes Festival.

Applauded as a composer whose "poetic is often very delicate and introspective..." (Guido Barbieri, Warner Classics), Rita was won First Prize at both the 2014 Krzysztof Penderecki International Composers' Competition and the 2011 Esoterics' POLYPHONOS Choral Composition Competition, and Second Prize at both the 2010 International Mahler Competition and the 2014 Florence International Choral Composition Competition. Her latest recordings appear on the Warner Classics and Stingray Classica labels.



© Alistair Eagle



© Ludovic Rolland Marcotte

ORCHESTRE MÉTROPOLITAIN

Founded in 1981, Orchestre Métropolitain (OM) is one of Quebec's key cultural ambassadors. Over the last 20 years, it has grown alongside its artistic director and principal conductor, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, whose career continues to reach new heights. This special relationship resonates throughout Montréal, with 50 concerts performed annually at the Maison symphonique and across the city, as well as with its webcasts and open-air concerts.

Driven by excellence, the Orchestra is known for its bold presence, authenticity and community engagement. Its educational initiatives, including *OM for Schools* and *OM for Future Talent*, cultivate a passion for music among young people. Its European and American tours cultivate critical attention and new international audiences. Winner of numerous national awards, OM has recorded some 20 performances with

ATMA Classique and two albums with the venerable Deutsche Grammophon.

More recently, Orchestre Métropolitain performed all nine Beethoven symphonies for its Summer of Beethoven webcast series, available exclusively on DG Stage. This initiative made OM one of the first orchestras in the world to regroup after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. OM has since rolled out numerous digital initiatives, connecting it to its audiences when other orchestras remained on hiatus.

Building on its special relationships and on the momentum of its concerts, recordings, education and digital initiatives, OM continues to enjoy growing success and an enviable international reputation.

orchestremetropolitain.com

MUSICIANS OF ORCHESTRE MÉTROPOLITAIN

FLUTES

Caroline Séguin • principal flute
Jocelyne Roy
Jeffrey Stonehouse • piccolo

OBOES

Jean-Luc Côté • principal oboe
Élise Poulin
Mélanie Harel • English horn

CLARINETS

Simon Aldrich • principal clarinet
David Perreault
Mélanie Bourassa • bass clarinet

BASSOONS

Michel Bettez • principal bassoon
Gabrièle Dostie-Poirier
Carmelle Préfontaine •
contrabassoon

HORNS

Louis-Philippe Marsolais • principal
horn
Simon Bourget
Corine Chartré-Lefebvre
Vincent Rancourt

TRUMPETS

Antoine Mailloux • principal
trumpet
Lise Bouchard
Henri Ferland

TROMBONES

Patrice Richer • principal trombone
Madeleine Doyon-Robitaille
Trevor Dix • bass trombone

TUBA

Alain Cazes

TIMPANI

Julien Bélanger

PERCUSSION

Alexandre Lavoie • principal
percussion
Vincent Séguin
Olivier Maranda

HARP

Robin Best

PIANO

Jennifer Bourdages • piano solo

FIRST VIOLINS

Yukari Cousineau • principal violin
Marcelle Mallette • associate
principal violin
Johanne Morin • assistant principal
violin
Alain Giguère • 2nd assistant
principal violin
Carolyn Klause
Florence Mallette
Alexander Lozowski
Ryan Truby
Ariane Bresse
John Corban

SECOND VIOLINS

Nancy Ricard • principal
second violin
Lyne Allard • associate
principal second violin
Lucie Ménard • assistant principal
second violin
Sylvie Harvey • 2nd assistant
principal second violin
Claudio Ricignuolo
Monique Lagacé
Isabelle Bélanger-Southey
Flaviu Zanca

VIOLAS

Julie Dupras • principal viola
François Vallières • associate
principal viola
Gérald Daigle • assistant principal
viola
Cynthia Blanchon
Amina Tebini
Sebastian Gonzalez Mora
Vincent Delorme

CELLOS

Vincent Bergeron • principal cello
Thérèse Ryan • associate principal
cello
Sheila Hannigan • assistant
principal cello
Carla Antoun
Veronika Ronkos
Christine Harvey

DOUBLE BASSES

René Gosselin • principal double
bass
Réal Montminy • associate principal
double bass
Gilbert Fleury • assistant principal
double bass
Catherine Lefebvre



ALEXANDRE BLOCH

CONDUCTOR

French-born Alexandre Bloch assumed the position of Music Director of Orchestre National de Lille at the start of the 2016/17 season. From 2015 – 2021, Alexandre was also Principal Guest Conductor of Düsseldorfer Symphoniker.

Alexandre leads a diverse and thrilling range of repertoire in Lille over the 2022/23 season, performing works in their main concert series by Britten, Bartok, Mahler and Berlioz among others, featuring internationally acclaimed soloists such as Isabelle Faust, Dame Sarah Connolly and Pierre-Laurent Aimard. The season with ONL will also include a tour to Salzburg with Nemanja Radulović. Guest conducting engagements include return visits to Opera de Lyon (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and Orchestre Métropolitain (Montréal). Debut appearances include Utah Symphony, a UK tour with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and performances at the Bratislava Festival with Slovak Philharmonic and Gil Shaham.

Recent highlights include debuts with Bayerische Staatsoper, Berner Symphonieorchester, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin (concerts and commercial recording with Daniel Müller-Schott); Tiroler Landstheater Orchester Innsbruck, Gurzenich-Orchester Köln and his acclaimed debut for Opéra de Lyon conducting George Benjamin's *Lessons in Love and Violence*. Work with Orchestre National de Lille has included many symphonic programmes, a critically acclaimed Mahler cycle, performances at the Festival de St Denis and at the Philharmonie de Paris, Stravinsky's major ballet scores and commercial recordings. Earlier seasons have taken him to Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Orchestra of the National Centre for Performing Arts Beijing and Vancouver Symphony, Musikkollegium Winterthur, Royal Northern Sinfonia, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and a tour to Kuwait with London Symphony Orchestra.

alexandrebloch.com

SHARON AZRIELI

CQ
SOPRANO

Montréal soprano Sharon Azrieli has enjoyed international success at world-famous venues including Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Opera and the Opéra Bastille de Paris, and with prominent organizations such as the Canadian Opera Company, the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal and the New Israel Opera. In 2019, she was awarded the National Order of Québec for her remarkable achievements as a performer.

Known for her versatility as a singer, Sharon has released several albums, including *Sharon Azrieli Sings Broadway*, *Rare French Arias of the 19th Century* and *Fiddler on the Roof* (in Yiddish). Her most recent album, *Frankly Sharon* (with the celebrated Broadway composer Frank Wildhorn) received high praise, with *Blogcritics*

noting: “Azrieli’s softly impassioned phrasing is exquisite.” Sharon’s upcoming recording projects include original songs and jazz standards with the pianist and composer Matt Herskowitz, a collection of Broadway numbers by Canadian composers, and an album about Jewish Divas of the 19th century with conductor Steven Mercurio.

She performed the role of Sister Dolcina in Puccini’s *Suor Angelica* at the Metropolitan Opera in 2018 and headlined a live televised concert for Classical FM. In 2019, she performed the roles of Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (National Arts Centre) and Liu in *Turandot* (Teatro Greco Siracusa). Of her Laurette in *Le Docteur Miracle* with L’Opéra Français de New

York, *The New Yorker* hailed her as a “mistress of merry inflections, piquant phrasing and pointed words.”

Sharon sang the title song of the Canadian film “Stand!” Her vocals are also featured in the Hollywood film “Stage Mother,” starring Lucy Liu, and the film “Shepherd: The Story of a Jewish Dog”, directed by Lynn Roth.

Sharon conceived of the Azrieli Music Prizes for the Azrieli Foundation in 2014 and is devoted to arts education and philanthropy. She sits on the boards of several philanthropic organizations, including the Azrieli Foundation.

sharonazrieli.com



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SEPIDEH RAISSADAT

VOICE & SETAR

Sepideh Raissadat features prominently in the new generation of classical Persian vocalists. She began studying Persian music at age 10 with the famous Iranian Diva Parissa and, later, with renowned masters Parviz Meshkatian and Mohammad-Reza Lotfi. With five critically acclaimed albums to her credit, Sepideh began her recording career at age 19 with an album alongside Parviz Meshkatian (*Konj-e Saburi*, 2000).

She later garnered invitations from prestigious institutions like UNESCO and the Vatican, and from the international media, such as the BBC and RAI.

In addition to her regular collaborations with Iranian musicians, Sepideh has worked with such prominent musicians and ensembles as Franco Battiato, Andrea Parodi, Ensemble Maraghi, Nexus Percussion, Constantinople and GRAMMY Award-winning Roomful of Teeth.

A PhD candidate at the University of Toronto and a recipient of Canada's Joseph-Armand Bombardier Award for Doctoral Scholarship, Sepideh has appeared as a guest speaker and artist-in-residence at various universities including Yale University, the University of Washington, the University of Cologne and the University of Bologna.

NAOMI SATO

SHŌ

Naomi Sato studied the shō with Ko Ishikawa at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music and has collaborated with many composers and ensembles around the world.

Naomi has performed with the Ives Ensemble, Nieuw Ensemble, Aurelia Saxophone Quartet, (Netherlands), Diotima Quartet, Ensemble Cairn (France), Fontana Mix Ensemble, Xenia Ensemble (Italy), Ictus Ensemble, B'Rock (Belgium), PHACE (Austria), Ensemble Resonanz (Germany), Shonorities (UK/Greece), Prague Modern (Czechia), New Music Network Philadelphia, N-JP project (U.S.) and the Vancouver Intercultural Orchestra (Canada).

She was an invited artist at music festivals such as Estovest (Italy), Ars Musica (Belgium), Royaumont (France), Nasimi (Azerbaijan) and the Darmstädter Ferienkurse (Germany).

Naomi has also participated in musical theatre at such prestigious establishments as the Royal Opera, Neuköllner Oper and Philharmonie Luxembourg. As a soloist and chamber musician, she has appeared in concerts in Japan, Europe, the U.S., Canada and Australia.

She has lectured on the contemporary music scene, seen through the lens of Japanese traditional music on three continents during the past 20 years, and has delivered composer workshops in the U.S. and Canada.

Naomi is currently based in Amsterdam, where she has been the shō player in the Amsterdam-based Atlas Ensemble and a workshop clinician for the Atlas Academy since 2004.

sato-naomi.com

© Robin Wong



ZHONGXI WU

SUONA & SHENG

Zhongxi Wu comes from a long line of folk musicians; he is the fourth generation to play traditional double reed and free reed wind instruments. He learned suona from his father, Wu Jingmin, and grew up touring small towns and villages in Heilongjiang province, playing the suona during traditional ceremonies with his family's band (Wu's Suona Band). He graduated from the Heilongjiang Performing Arts University where he specialized in suona.

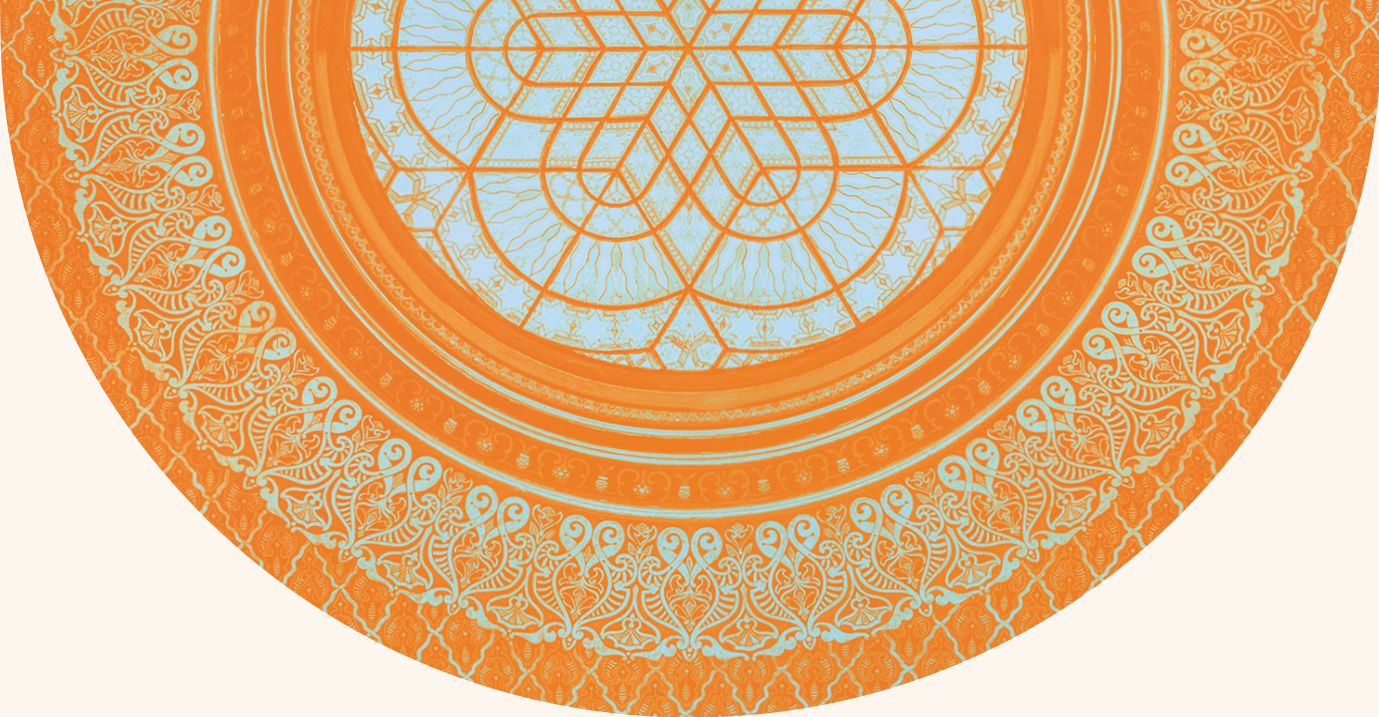
Zhongxi has since performed in China, Japan, the U.S., Europe and Canada, in such areas as solo and orchestral works, traditional Chinese opera, experimental theatre, contemporary music, Celtic traditions and jazz idioms. Since immigrating to Canada, he also studied the Scottish Highland bagpipes and currently plays with the Delta Police Pipe Band, where he holds the rank of Pipe Sergeant.

Recently, Zhongxi recorded with the Vancouver Intercultural Orchestra on the album *In the Key of the World* and with the Jodi Proznick Trio on the upcoming album *Jasmine Jazz*.

Zhongxi has also taught students from the UBC School of Music to play Chinese reed instruments and is a faculty member of the World Music department at the VSO School of Music, where he teaches suona and sheng (a free reed mouth organ.)



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THE 2022 AMP JEWISH MUSIC JURY

Maestro **Boris Brott (z'l)** OC, O.Ont, GOQ enjoyed an internationally recognized career as guest conductor, educator, motivational speaker and cultural ambassador. He was Artistic Director of the Orchestre classique de Montréal (formerly the McGill Chamber Orchestra), the National Academy Orchestra of Canada and the Brott Music Festival. He also served as Founding Music Director of the New West Symphony in Los Angeles, Music Director and Conductor for the Royal Ballet, Covent Garden, Chief Conductor of the BBC National Symphony of Wales and Music Director of the Royal Northern Sinfonia. Early in his career, Boris was Assistant Conductor to the New York Philharmonic under the late Leonard Bernstein. He has also performed as Principal Guest Conductor of the Petruzzelli Theatre in Bari, Italy. Boris was an Officer of the Order of Canada, Member of the Order of Ontario and Grand officier de l'Ordre national du Québec.

Brian Current's music has been broadcast in over 35 countries and awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Barlow Prize (U.S.), a Premio Fedora (Italy), a Jules Léger Prize and a Selected Work (under 30) at the International Rostrum of Composers. In 2016, he won the inaugural Azrieli Commission for Jewish Music. Brian's pieces have been programmed by all major symphony orchestras in Canada and by dozens of professional orchestras, ensembles and opera companies around the world. His music appears on 10 commercial recordings, including three albums devoted exclusively to his works. The Naxos recording of his opera *Airline Icarus* earned him the 2015 JUNO Award for Best Classical Composition of the Year. Brian is also an in-demand guest conductor and regularly leads contemporary music ensembles and orchestral programs. In 2021, he was appointed Artistic Director of New Music Concerts. Since 2007, he has been Director of the Glenn Gould School's New Music Ensemble at The Royal Conservatory.

Betty Olivero is a contemporary Israeli composer who has spent most of her career in Florence, Italy. She is a winner of such prestigious awards as the Emet Prize for Art, Science and Culture (2015), the Koussevitzky Award (2000) and the Fromm Award (1986). She also holds numerous Israeli accolades, including the Prime Minister's Prize (2001 and 2009), the Rosenblum Award (2003), the Landau Award (2004), the ACUM prize for Life Achievement (2004) and the ACUM Prize for Achievement of the Year (2010). Betty's works are published by Universal Music/Ricordi and the Israel Music Institute. Her music is recorded by ECM, Angel, Koch International, Ricordi, Plane, IMI, Beit Hatefutsoth and Folkways labels. Between 2004 and 2008, Betty was composer-in-residence for the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. She is currently a Full Professor of Composition at Bar-Ilan University.

Dr. Neil W. Levin is a world-renowned expert in Jewish-related music and has authored hundreds of publications on the subject. He has served on the faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America since 1982 and has been the Anne E. Leibowitz Visiting Professor in Residence in Music at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research since 2016. In 1993, Neil became Artistic Director and Editor-in-Chief of the Milken Archive of Jewish Music, which documents, preserves and disseminates music of the Jewish experience. The Archive is known for its ground-breaking 51-CD series released by Naxos. He devised, scripted and supervised the Archive's theatrical concert presentation, *One People – Many Voices*, which received its premiere in 2006 by the L.A. Philharmonic under Maestro Gerard Schwarz. Neil is also an accomplished pianist and choral conductor. He founded the Schola Hebraica, which has toured North America and England, and has directed major concerts at Lincoln Center, Royal Festival Hall and the Barbican Centre.

Maestro **Steven Mercurio** is an internationally acclaimed conductor and composer whose musical versatility encompasses the symphonic and operatic worlds. Currently the Music Director of the Czech National Symphony Orchestra, he has conducted many other orchestras, including the London Philharmonic, Prague Philharmonia, Sydney Symphony Orchestra and New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. For five years he was Music Director of the Spoleto Festival and Principal Conductor of the Opera Company of Philadelphia. Steven has conducted numerous historic telecasts, including the "Christmas in Vienna" series with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra for Sony Classical (highlighted by the 1999 concert featuring "The Three Tenors") and the PBS special "American Dream—Andrea Bocelli's Statue of Liberty Concert" with the New Jersey Symphony. He also led the worldwide tour of Sting, featuring the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and culminating in the DVD "Live in Berlin." Also a composer, Steven's *For Lost Loved Ones* was premiered by Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic.

THE 2022 AMP CANADIAN MUSIC JURY

Barbara Assiginaak, O.Ont is an Anishinaabekwe (Odawa, Ojibwe and Potawatomi) composer, performer and teacher. From an early age, she practised music for traditional First Nations flutes and voice in the Anishinaabe style. She engages in outdoor environmental education rooted in traditional Anishinaabeg teachings, working with Elders in ceremonies and traditional singing, while supporting Indigenous youth. Barbara graduated from the Hochschule für Musik in Munich and the University of Toronto. She furthered her studies in composition and theory with Dr. Samuel Dolin, Sasha Rapaport and Arthur Levine and extended her music composition studies with Sir Peter Maxwell-Davies, Robert Saxton and Helmut Lachenmann. Her music for soloists, chamber ensembles, orchestra, film, theatre, dance, interdisciplinary performance and multimedia has been premiered internationally in more than 12 countries. Barbara is currently an Assistant Professor in Composition at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Dr. Mary Ingraham is a music historian and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Saint Mary's University in Halifax. Previously, she served as the Director of the Sound Studies Institute at the University of Alberta, a Professor of Musicology and Manager of UAlberta partnerships with the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society of Alberta and the Cultures of Sound Network. Mary's scholarly interests are largely connected to culture in Canada. Her work is both historical and contemporary, critical and pedagogical, and includes collaborations with Indigenous communities in BC and Alberta. Her research appears in many journals and with Ashgate, Routledge, Oxford University, University of Alberta and University of Michigan presses. She is the author of multiple online resources for exploring culture in Canada, including "Resounding Culture: Recontextualizing resources for histories of music in Canada."

David Pay, one of today's leading-edge classical and contemporary music programmers, is the founder and Artistic Director of Vancouver's Music on Main. He focuses on how music from different eras and genres can shed light on one another, and his programming creates innovative ways for audiences and musicians to engage. *The Huffington Post* praised his concerts for spanning "the range of human experience." David is a frequent speaker at conferences across North America and Europe and has served as Artistic Director of ISCM World New Music Days 2017, the largest new music festival in Canadian history. He has been on faculty at The Banff Centre and Capilano University, and sits on the Executive Committee of the International Society for Contemporary Music.

Composer **Ana Sokolović** was born in Belgrade and has been based in Montréal since 1992. Her vast catalogue – inspired by differing artistic disciplines, playful images and Balkan rhythms – has been performed regularly throughout Europe and North America. Ana's works have been recorded on more than 20 albums, earning her two consecutive JUNO Awards for Classical Composition of the Year. Her opera, *Svadba*, which "seems to invent a universal phonetics of the human heart" (*Le Monde*), has been performed more than 50 times. In 2021, she was appointed composer-in-residence of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. In 2022, she was awarded the first Canada Research Chair in Opera Creation at l'Université de Montréal, where she is a Professor of Composition. She was recently named Artistic Director of the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec. Ana's work is published by Boosey & Hawkes.

Described as a "new music visionary" (National Arts Centre), composer **Andrew Staniland** has established himself as one of Canada's most important and innovative musical voices. His music is performed and broadcast internationally and has been described by Alex Ross in *The New Yorker* as "alternately beautiful and terrifying." Important accolades include three JUNO nominations, the 2016 Terra Nova Young Innovators Award, the National Grand Prize of EVOLUTION (presented in 2009 by CBC Radio 2/Espace Musique and The Banff Centre) and the Karen Keiser Prize in Canadian Music (2004). One of the leading composers of his generation, Andrew has been recognized by election to the inaugural cohort of the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists of the Royal Society of Canada. He was an Affiliate Composer to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (2006-2009) and the National Arts Centre Orchestra (2002-2004) and was in residence at the Centre du Création Musicale Iannis Xenakis (Paris, 2005). He is currently on faculty at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland.

2022 AMP TEAM

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2022
— 23

FRIDAY
NOV. 4
7:30 P.M.

FRANK
RODRIGO
ODGERS
DE FALLA
MÁRQUEZ

LINA GONZALEZ-GRANADOS

Conductor

MILOŠ

Guitar

LATIN WAVES

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In Memoriam

BORIS BROTT Z'L

**A message from Sharon Azrieli on behalf of the
Azrieli Foundation:**

It is with much love, yet very heavy hearts, that we remember the untimely passing of Maestro Boris Brott, OC, O.Ont, GOQ.

Boris was an irreplaceable part of the Azrieli Music Prizes community, having served with dedication and passion on both the Jewish Music Prizes Jury and the Advisory Council. Here, we witnessed so much of what made him indispensable to us all. He had an exceptional sense of collaboration, a keen intelligence, a deep thoughtfulness and a no-nonsense approach to solving problems. This was all matched by a playful curiosity and a sharp sense of humour.

Boris was one of the most internationally recognized Canadian conductors of his generation. He dedicated his life to educating, motivating and bridging cultures through music. As Artistic Director of the Orchestre classique de Montréal (formerly McGill Chamber Orchestra), Boris collaborated with AMP frequently and creatively. We will forever remember his life-affirming spirit, generous leadership and unyielding commitment to the universal and unifying power of music.

Boris was a close friend, mentor and champion. While it is still impossible for me to imagine the world without him, I am forever grateful to have had the joy of knowing and working with him for so many years. I wholeheartedly dedicate tonight's celebration, particularly my performance, to his memory.



Sharon Azrieli and Boris Brott, 2022 AMP Laureates Announcement Event | © Danylo Bobyk

SPECIAL THANKS

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and the whole team for their excellent partnership

PRODCAN INC.

Didier Bensa, Kim Savoie-Thibault and
the team for making us look good on screen

MEDICI TV

Misha Aster for bring our Laureates' music to the
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Kelly Rice for his insight, charm and conviviality
as our Meet the Laureates host

Cory Garfinkle for planning our pre-concert
events
with so much style and flair

Robert Markow for his ongoing partnership and
thoughtful preparation of our programme notes

Dominique Denis for his expert translation
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Patricia Price, Matthew Herman, Anna Helfin
and **Julianne Zahl** for deftly handling our PR with
such ease and warmth

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Paul Steenhuisen for bringing our Laureates'
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Susan Abramovitch for her exceptional counsel

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The team for their outstanding work in always
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