Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition
2015 Winner’s Tour

JOSHUA PETERS
VIOLIN

&

KATHERINE DOWLING
PIANO

Friday, November 27, 2015 • 8:00 p.m.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall
MacLaurin Building, University of Victoria
Free admission

Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2 “Quasi una Sonata” (1967-68)  Alfred Schnittke  (1934–1998)


***INTERMISSION***

Beverages and snacks available at the concession located in the lounge.

Into the Ether ‡  Jordan Pal*  (b. 1983)


* Canadian works
‡ 2015 E-Gré Commissioned Composition

The E-Gré Competition acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, which last year invested $157 million to bring the arts to Canadians throughout the country.

Le Concours E-Gré remercie le Conseil des arts du Canada de son soutien. L’an dernier, le Conseil a investi 157 millions de dollars pourmettre de l’art dans la vie des Canadiennes et des Canadiens de tout le pays.

The 2016 Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition May 6-8, 2016 is open to pianists. (See http://e-gre.ca for details.) The first place winner will receive a cash prize of $10,000 and a Canadian tour (recital fees ca. $5,000 for the Winner and pianist each).
BIOGRAPHIES

Joshua Peters, violin

Born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Joshua Peters began his violin studies at the age of four as a student of Gwen Hoebig and Karl Stobbe. He continued his studies at McGill University with Jonathan Crow, Denise Lupien, and Axel Strauss, and at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music as a student of Ian Swensen.

Particularly drawn to the performance of chamber music, Peters has collaborated with many renowned musicians including Menahem Pressler, Kim Kashkashian, André LaPlante, Steven Dann, and members of the Emerson, Concord, St. Lawrence, and Pacifica quartets. He has also studied chamber music with members of the Alban Berg, Guarneri, Cleveland, Juilliard, Kronos, Miró, and Takács String Quartets.

He has appeared as a soloist on numerous occasions with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, as concertmaster of the McGill Symphony Orchestra, and as a member of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

Peters is the First Prize Winner of the 2015 Eckhardt-Gramatté Music Competition, the First Prize Winner of the 2014 WMC Doris McClellan Competition, and also wishes to acknowledge the support of the Sylva Gelber Foundation and the Manitoba Arts Council.

Katherine Dowling, piano

Praised by the New York Times for her “crystalline performances, gestural expressiveness, and careful attention to color,” pianist Katherine Dowling has performed across North America and the United Kingdom. Following two seasons as a fellow of the Tanglewood Music Center, Katherine was awarded the Henri Kohn Memorial Prize and appointed to the contemporary ensemble-in-residence of the center, the New Fromm Players. She joined Gruppo Montebello in 2011, an all-star chamber ensemble directed by Henk Guittart, whose recordings appear on the Etcetera label. Katherine is further familiar to audiences through her association with The Banff Centre, where she has held numerous solo and collaborative residencies. She has enjoyed working with esteemed artists including the Jupiter String Quartet, Shauna Rolston, Joel Sachs, Marc Destrubé, composers John Harbison, Anthony Cheung, Marco Stroppa, and David Lang, and visual artist Andrea Büttner.

Katherine credits her teacher, Gil Kalish, as the major influence in her musical life.
**Program Notes**

**Birdsong** - Vivian Fung

*Birdsong* for violin and piano (2012), commissioned by the Delaware Chamber Music Festival through funding from the DeRosa Family Fund, is written in memoriam Julian Rodescu. The work, written for Kristin Lee, violinist, and Conor Hanick, pianist, showcases the virtuosity of both piano and violin, with quick runs, intense rhythmic passages, and exploration of improvisational moments. The title refers to the birdcalls of the opening and closing, as well as the general rhapsodic nature of the violin in this piece.

– Program notes by the composer

**Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2 “Quasi una Sonata”** - Alfred Schnittke

Schnittke’s second sonata for violin and piano was written in 1967–1968 for his friend, the violinist Mark Lubotsky. It is the first example of polystylism in Schnittke’s career, the style of music for which he is most well-known. In this piece, Schnittke weaves a complex fabric of styles together, with references to the Baroque period, total serialism, jazz, and graphic notation. The subtitle, “Quasi una Sonata” means “like a sonata” or “in the manner of a sonata.” This description of the piece being “like a sonata” is explained by Schnittke as a “sort of borderline case of sonata form (...) the form is called into question; it seems not to be achieved - and then the sonata is already over." Schnittke continues: “suddenly I had to write this piece, without rules of construction. It was, so to speak, a mutiny against everything else.” The piece stops and starts, punctuated by uncomfortably long silences. Just as the music feels like it’s going somewhere, it cuts off abruptly. Schnittke also uses interesting markings to describe the tempo of certain sections: some sections are “senza tempo” or “without tempo”, and he also draws the distinction between “quasi cadenza” and “cadenza”. Despite the lack of traditional form, the piece carries a great deal of compositional continuity and emotional weight, equivalent to that of a sonata in a traditional form. The main way Schnittke does this is by developing the relationship of the first two chords of the piece: a loud G-minor triad in the piano, followed by a dissonant chord in the violin about six seconds later. This relationship is explored throughout the work, most notably at the climax of the piece, which is the quasi-recapitulation of the opening material. In this section, the pianist plays the opening g-minor chord repeatedly at triple-forte, at one point, twenty-eight times in a row. During the g-minor chords, the violinist refuses to compete, and remains silent.
Shades of a Romance - John Estacio

*Shades of a Romance* (1996) was commissioned by the CBC, specifically for Gwen Hoebig and David Moroz. While writing the piece, I knew it was going to be premiered by a husband and wife team so I endeavoured to make the relationship between the two instruments quite intimate and personal.

While writing the piece, I drew upon my own personal experiences. Keeping in mind the notion that romances can lead to lifelong relationships, or end in flames, the piece is cast in two sections; the first section of the piece is lyrical and passionate, while the second part is fiery, raw, rhythmical and tempestuous. It’s up to the listener’s imagination to determine if the romance, as depicted in the performance, concludes with the lovers going their separate ways, or lighting up a cigarette.

– Program notes by the composer

Into the Ether - Jordan Pal 2015 E-Gré Commissioned Composition

At the edge of the known, past cloudless skies and the light of a mil-lion miles. Go forth. Towards the darkness. Into the ether; towards the unknown.

Cast in a single movement, *Into the Ether* takes us into the infinite. From the treacherously stratospheric but sublimely ethereal, through to the hypersonic and darkly mercurial, the music goes deeper; reaches higher; and pushes faster into the immeasurable unknown. Opening long lines suspend over a kaleidoscope of thirty-second notes. Hauntingly delicate refractions stream forth with ever-increasing intensity. The music ‘breaks,’ and 32nds become 16th triplets. Fiercely animated and decidedly capricious, interspersions of the long lines and reinterpretations of the opening piano accompaniment build to a varied return of the introduction. ‘Breaking off’ again, the piece surges to the work’s electric close, vanishing into the ether.

Designed to highlight the player’s technical prowess and expressive range, *Into the Ether* is a dramatic showpiece that centers on the violin soloist. Dramatic gestures, elaborate string techniques, and the dynamic interaction between the piano and stringed instrument, combine to produce a work that forces the player to engage with it in a very physical way. Through its unceasing musical flow and extreme technical demands, *Into the Ether* challenges the musician to reach into the infinite.

– Program notes by the composer
Mieczyslaw Weinberg's music has recently been gaining recognition outside of Eastern Europe as some of the most important and original music to have been composed in Russia during the 20th century. Weinberg was born in Poland and fled to Russia during the Second World after his family was killed in the Holocaust. In 1953, Weinberg was arrested for the crime of "Jewish Bourgeois Nationalism" and spent nine months in the infamous Lubyanka prison. If it weren’t for the death of Stalin in 1953, Weinberg probably would have died in prison. The *Fifth Violin Sonata* (1953) is the first piece Weinberg wrote after being released and is dedicated to Dmitri Shostakovich. Weinberg and Shostakovich were neighbors and had a very close friendship. They would show each other their works as they were writing and would frequently quote one another in their own music. When Weinberg was arrested, Shostakovich took power of attorney over Weinberg's children and would have adopted them in the event that Weinberg's wife was also arrested. One can imagine that this Violin Sonata is Weinberg's way of showing his appreciation to Shostakovich for his kindness and support of Weinberg's family during his time in prison. It is one of his most beautiful works and perfectly represents his compositional voice.

The work begins quietly with a haunting theme played by the piano, which is the only theme that appears in the first movement. The second movement is vigorous, fast and occasionally violent in character. The third movement is a *Scherzo* with its main theme played in double-stops by the violin. The last movement begins with one of most beautiful wind-like effects in the entire violin repertoire, and gradually transforms into a lyrical *Allegretto*. The *Allegretto* theme gains intensity and culminates in a brilliantly composed fugal passage in the piano at the climax of the work.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, November 28, 8:00 p.m. ($15 & $10)
UVIC JAZZ ENSEMBLE
Mostly Monk: Celebrating Thelonious Monk
Dr. Patrick Boyle, director
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Tuesday, December 1, 12:30 p.m. (Admission by donation)
TUESDAYMUSIC
Take an afternoon break to enjoy a concert of varied repertoire and instruments featuring School of Music students.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Thursday, December 3, 10:30 a.m. (Admission by donation)
AFRICAN PERCUSSION CONCERT
The thirty-member percussion ensemble from the African Hand Drumming class perform a repertoire of rhythms on djembe, balafon and dundun.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Thursday, December 3, 8:00 p.m. ($15 & $10)
DON WRIGHT SYMPHONIC WINDS
Dr. Michael Keddy, conductor
Featuring student musicians from across the UVic campus.
University Centre Farquhar Auditorium

Friday, December 4, 12:30 p.m. (Admission by donation)
FRIDAYMUSIC
Featuring new music by School of Music composition students.
Phillip T. Young Recital Hall

Friday, December 4, 8:00 p.m. (Admission by donation)
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA CHOIRS: Sing, Choirs of Angels!
The UVic Choirs return by popular demand to present a gift of choral music to the Greater Victoria community in their second annual joint concert. Featuring the UVic Chorus, Chamber Singers, Women’s Choir and Vocal Jazz Ensemble.
Christ Church Cathedral (Quadra St. at Rockland Ave.)

Tickets available at the UVic Ticket Centre (250-721-8480), online (www.tickets.uvic.ca) and at the door.

To receive our On the Pulse brochure and newsletter by email, contact: concert@uvic.ca