

Friday, April 12, 2024 Lamon Hall Trinity-St. Paul's Centre

25th Anniversary Season

NURHAN ARMAN, Conductor MARIO CARBOTTA, Flutist SHARON WEI, Violist

Prayer
World Premiere

Nina Grigoryan (1976 -)

Concerto for Viola with Strings and Percussion

Marjan Mozetich (1948 -)

- I. Flowing
- II. Romanza
- III. Bright and quick

Sharon Wei, Violist

Flute Concerto in E minor, Op.57 Giuseppe Saverio Raffaele Mercadante (1795-1870)

- I. Allegro maestoso
- II. Largo
- III. Rondo

Mario Carbotta, Flutist

- intermission -

String Quartet No.14 in G, K 387 "Spring" Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Orchestra version by Nurhan Arman (1756-1791)

I. Allegro vivace assai

II. Menuetto; Allegretto

III. Andante cantabile

IV. Fugue: Molto allegro

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Sinfonia Toronto

Now in its 25th season, Sinfonia Toronto has toured in Europe, the US, South America and China, and performs in cities across Ontario. It has released six cd's, including the JUNO winner *Flanders Fields Reflections* and *Shadow & Light* in May 2023 featuring three Canadian double concertos.

Sinfonia Toronto's Digital Inclusion Project has shared concert livestreams and videos free for residents in 43 long-term care homes in Ontario and students attending non-profit community music schools. Their interactive 'Concerts under Construction' programs introduce students in high-needs schools to varied musical styles and model the positive effects of cooperation.

The orchestra's repertoire includes all the major string orchestra works of the 18th through 21st centuries, and it has premiered many new works, especially music by Canadian composers. Under the baton of Music Director Nurhan Arman, the orchestra's performances present outstanding international guest artists and prominent Canadian musicians.



Nurhan Arman, Music Director

During the 2022-23 season in addition to his leadership of Sinfonia Toronto Nurhan Arman guest-conducted the Orchestre Classique de Montréal and orchestras in Germany, Georgia, Greece and Italy. Other recent engagements have included a four-concert tour in Italy with Orchestra I Pomeriggi Musicali, the Festival Udine Castello, National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia and return engagements with the Kammerorchester Arpeggione in Austria and San Remo Philharmonic in Italy. His 2023-2024 season has taken off with the opening concert of Sinfonia Toronto's 25th Anniversary season and guest engagements in Austria and Italy.

Maestro Arman has conducted throughout Canada, Europe, Asia, South America and the United States, returning regularly to many orchestras in Europe. Among the orchestras he has conducted are the Moscow Philharmonic, the Deutsches Kammerorchester, l'Orchestre Regional d'Ile de France, Hermitage Orchestra St. Petersburg, the Hungarian Symphony, Orchestra Milano Classica and Belgrade Philharmonic.

Born to Armenian parents in Istanbul, he played his first violin recital at the age of 13. After arriving in the United States on a Disney Foundation scholarship, he concertized from coast to coast, performing across the United States and at the Tanglewood, Spoleto, New York and Florida music festivals. After several seasons of leading US orchestras as concertmaster, he began a conducting career that has taken him all over the world.

Maestro Arman has served as an adjudicator for international conducting competitions in Poland and Canada and has taught conducting to several generations of students at the Brockport Festival and the Florida Festival in the United States, the Northern Music Festival in Canada and the Royal Conservatory of Music.



Happy 25th Silver Anniversary season!

Our musicians and I send out warmest greetings and gratitude to our audiences, donors, granting agencies and business partners for their support!

It has been a great privilege to make music together, exploring magical creations of the past and present, and introducing terrific young performers in Toronto.

During international tours on four continents we have experienced the power of music to connect cultures. Our inspirations and dreams for a better world are endless. We are delighted to have you with us for this season of celebration, passion and wonderful music.

Nurhan Arman Music Director

Program Notes

By Dr. Lorne Tepperman

PrayerWorld premiere

Nina Grigoryan (1976 -)

Nina Grigoryan is an Armenian composer and teacher of composition, music theory, solfège, piano and music history. She began writing music when she was only four, and won composition prizes while still a child, including First Prize in the Khachaturian Competition with her musical play *Milky Way*. She studied at Komitas Conservatory with Lazar Saryan and Eduard Mirzoyan. While still a student there she won Second Prize in the Komitas Competition for her symphonic work *Perception* and then First Prize for a musical novel based on verses by the Armenian writer Kutchak.

After completing her doctorate Grigoryan joined the conservatory faculty for several years before going to Moscow in 2002-2003 for a composition internship under the guidance of Karen Khachaturian at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory. Since 2006 she has lived in Portugal, where she composes, teaches and organizes concerts and workshops dedicated to Armenian music. She has participated in organizing the Gulbenkian Foundation's Summer Garden Festival, and led Summer Garden workshops. In 2019 she released her first CD, dedicated to the 150th anniversary of Komitas and also music by Arno Babajanian, all performed by the Aeternus Trio.

Viola Concerto with Strings and Percussion

Marjan Mozetich (1948 -)

Marjan Mozetich is one of the most broadcast classical composers in Canada. He has garnered numerous awards, including the 2010 Juno Award for Best Classical Composition of the Year, and the SOCAN Matejcek Concert Music Prize awarded to the most performed and broadcast composer in Canada twice, in 2002 and 2006. He has written over 70 works for a myriad of instrumental and vocal combinations, for symphonic orchestras, chamber ensembles, choirs and soloists as well as for theatre, film and dance. His works have been premiered and performed by some of the world's most esteemed orchestras and musicians.

Mozetich's Concerto for Viola, Vibraphone and String Orchestra was commissioned through an Ontario Arts Council grant and generous assistance from a private donor, Mr. Hans-Christian Behm and premiered by Sinfonia Toronto with violist Rivka Golani and vibraphonist Dean Kurtis-Pomeroy in March 2013.

The concerto is in three movements: a dramatic first movement loosely based on an Indonesian scale; a middle movement Romance especially funded by Mr. Behm and dedicated his his violist friend Thérèse, an elegiac movement based on his initials H(B-flat)-B-C; and a rhythmic, fast-paced finale, a race between the viola and the orchestra.

Flute Concerto in E Minor Giuseppe Saverio Raffaele Mercadante (1795-1870)

Mercadante studied flute, violin and composition at the conservatory in Naples. At the age of 22, he became conductor of the orchestra there, tasked with composing symphonies and concertos. With Rossini's encouragement, he began to compose operas and soon won notable success. Many of his operas are forgotten today, but several received revivals in the 20th century.

After working for periods in Vienna, Madrid, Lisbon and Paris, Mercadante re-established himself in Italy in 1831. His operatic style evolved and

matured, becoming more dramatic and foretelling the works of Verdi. In the period after 1831 he composed some of his most important works, creating more ensemble scenes, evolving away from the historic style in which the diva, the lead female singer, sang alone on stage.



Mercadante also composed a great many instrumental works - indeed more than most of his contemporaries focused on operas - thanks to his lifelong preoccupation with orchestration. The French flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal notably revived and recorded several Mercadante concertos for flute and string orchestra, including this grand and romantic E minor concerto.

Today this concerto is celebrated for its intricate melodies and compelling harmonies. The first movement *Allegro Maestoso* begins with a beautiful and mellow melody for the flute, accompanied softly by the orchestra. As the movement progresses, the flute becomes more assertive, with intricate runs, arpeggios, and trills that make for a thrilling performance.

The second movement *Adagio* is known for a haunting melody producing peace and tranquility in listeners. It ends with a beautiful solo cadenza, incorporating dazzling runs and trills while remaining true to the romantic mood of the piece. The final movement, *Rondo Russo*, is joyous and energetic, characterized by its lively pace and playful melody.

String Quartet No.14 in G, K387, 'Spring' Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Orchestra version by Nurhan Arman (1756-1791)

Mozart's String Quartet No.14 in G major K.387, commonly known as the "Spring" quartet, is one of his best-known chamber works. Composed in 1782, it is the first of Mozart's six "Haydn" quartets, written after a period of study under Joseph Haydn and in tribute to the older composer.

By the time he wrote this quartet, Mozart was already starting to enjoy success. Newly set up in Vienna, he often performed as a pianist, soon recognized as "the finest keyboard player in Vienna," according to one commentator. He also prospered as a composer; in 1782 his opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio* achieved great success. It was soon being performed throughout German-speaking Europe, confirming Mozart's reputation as a composer.

Mozart was also starting to enjoy romance and marriage. After failing to win the hand of Aloysia Weber, who married an actor and artist instead, Mozart shifted his interest to Aloysia's sister, Constanze. The courtship did not go smoothly. He and Constanze briefly separated in April 1782, but then did marry. With large returns from his concerts and compositions, Mozart and his wife adopted a luxurious lifestyle, moving to an expensive apartment and purchasing a fine fortepiano and a billiard table. They sent their son to an expensive boarding school and kept servants. Mozart saved little for the future, but this was a joyful period, which shows in this work.

The Spring Quartet earned its nickname because of its cheerful, lighthearted character, reminiscent of the freshness and vitality of spring. The opening

Dr. Raffi Aynaciyan



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movement is lively and bright, full of sudden shifts in tempo and texture. It begins with a sprightly theme for the cello and viola, soon picked up by the violins. The second theme, in the relative key of E minor, offers a moment of contrast before returning to the lively G major of the opening.

The second movement is a minuet, usually the third movement in a standard quartet. The minuet, a typical dance form of the time, has a lilting rhythm and playful character, with the violins and viola exchanging melodies

throughout. The trio in the middle has a darker, unsettled mood, offering a change from the minuet with a slower, more introspective theme.

In the third movement, a lyrical, contemplative melody passes between all the instruments, with the viola and cello featured in the middle section. The final movement ends the quartet energetically, with joyful themes weaving among the instruments in a lively and intricate dance. Sudden shifts in tempo and mood remind us of the first movement, and the piece scurries to a conclusion with a rousing *accelerando*.

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Violist Sharon Wei has played concertos with orchestras including Symphony of the Redwoods, Kingston Symphony, Sinfonia Toronto, Orchestra of Southern Utah, San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and Connecticut Valley Chamber Orchestra. In 2022 she premiered Richard Mascall's *Ziigwan* concerto with Indigenous Elder John Rice as narrator with the London Symphonia.

As a chamber musician she regularly takes part in international festivals such as the Verbier Festival, Marlboro Music, Prussia Cove in the UK, Banff, Seattle, Giverny and Ravinia. She has performed with renowned musicians including James Ehnes, Gary Hoffman, Claude Frank, Joseph Silverstein, James Campbell and the Amernet and St. Lawrence String Quartets. In 2022-2023 she performed on a Musicians from Marlboro tour in Carnegie Hall, Perelman Theater in Philadelphia and the Freer Gallery in Washington DC, and premiered a new string trio by Reena Esmail in Thailand at the International Viola Festival.

Sharon is the violist of the award-winning New Orford String Quartet, comprised of concertmasters and principals from the Toronto and Montreal Symphonies and dedicated to promoting Canadian works. Last season the quartet returned to Mount Royal University and Western University as artists-in-residence as well as Whitehorse Concerts, Toronto Summer Music

and Northwestern University. The quartet's appearances this season include concerts in Vancouver, Victoria, Regina, Saskatoon and Winnipeg. Sharon has performed recital tours with pianist Angela Park under the auspices of Debut Atlantic and Prairie Debut. Together they co-founded Ensemble Made in Canada in 2006 and were awarded a CBC Galaxie Prize.

Sharon has been guest principal violist of the Cincinnati Symphony, Canadian Opera Company and Ensemble Matheus in Paris. Since 2000 she has been principal violist with the Verbier Chamber Orchestra in Switzerland, touring with soloists such as Yuja Wang, Daniel Trifinov, Joshua Bell, Maxim Vengerov and Marta Argerich.

Sharon has been on faculty at Yale and Stanford and is currently Associate Professor of Viola and acting Assistant Dean of Research at Western University. She has given masterclasses for the American Viola Society Festival, Beijing Conservatory and universities across Canada and is a regular faculty violist at Curtis Summerfest, Scotia Festival, Tuckamore Festival, Toronto Summer Music and Orford Academy.

Sharon was recognized with a 2021 Faculty Scholar Award at Western University, won the viola prize at Yale University and has received grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, FACTOR and Western University. She has recorded for Centrediscs, CBC, Onyx Classics, Warner Classics and is often heard on CBC Radio and Air Canada Enroute.



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Flutist Mario Carbotta has been an acclaimed soloist with Sinfonia Toronto in several previous seasons and has performed with too other many orchestras to count. A very short list would include the Mannheim Chamber Orchestra, Mainz Chamber Orchestra, Prague Virtuosi, Strings of La Scala, Vienna Tonkünstler-Orchester, Israeli Symphonette, Orquestra do Algarve, Südwestdeutsche

Philharmonie, Orquestra Classica de Madeira, San Remo Philharmonic, Istanbul Symphony, and China People's Republic Radio-TV Orchestra.

Acclaimed by critics in reviews like "Flutist Carbotta is simply superb" (Audiophile Audition Classical) and "Les interprètes sont d'une musicalité et d'un goût parfaits" (Le Monde de la Musique), Carbotta has played all over Italy, throughout Europe and in the Middle East, North Africa, Asia, Mexico, Canada and the US. He has performed in major concert halls including the Grosser Musikvereinssaal in Vienna, Rudolfinum in Prague, Swiss Radio Hall in Lugano, Sala "G.Verdi" in Milan, Auditoro Manuel de Falla in Granada, Cairo Opera House and at the international festivals of Castel de Perelada, Ljubljana, Santander, Teheran and Zagreb.

He is an advocate for both new music and historical composers unjustly neglected. He has performed the premieres of works by a number of Italian contemporary composers, among them Cattaneo, Cognazzo, Crisigiovanni, Ermirio, Fellegara, Gelmetti, Possio, Piacentini, Solbiati, Taglietti, Talmell and a number of which have been dedicated to him. He has carried out



extensive research into forgotten but important composers, editing sonatas by G.A. Fioroni, P. Nardini, P. Lichtenthal and A. Rolla for the publishers Bèrben, Carisch and Rugginenti.

Mario is one of the world's most-recorded flutists, with releases on Dynamic, Tactus, Nuova Era and Rugginenti. His discography includes the first contemporary recordings of works by Giuseppe Sammartini and Mario Pilati; the entire catalogue of works for flute by Nino Rota; lieder by Caspar Fürstenau, recorded with the choir of the Swiss Radio; duets for flute and violin and the six quartets and the concerto for flute and orchestra by Alessandro Rolla; the Triple Concerto "Degli oleandri" by Raffaele Gervasio, with the Orchestra Sinfonica Lucana; "Concert Memories" by Gianni Possio; and all the concerts for flute and orchestra by Saverio Mercadante, with the Solisti Aquilani.

A dedicated and expert teacher, Mario Carbotta has given courses and master classes in the US, Canada, at the International Academy of Music in Milan, and at the International Summer Courses in Nowy Sacz, Poland. He holds a permanent Professorship at the Boccherini Conservatory in Lucca.

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