

canadian SINFONIETTA

SATURDAY MAY 23, 2026 @ 7:30 PM

Agricola Church, 25 Old York Mills Rd.

Featuring

Joyce Lai, violin

Andras Weber, cello

Erika Crino, piano

William Beauvais, guitar

WILLIAM BEAUVAIS Third Circle (2019) for violin, guitar, cello, and piano

Notes for Third Circle from the composer

Some of my pieces reflect a desire to play and create music akin to works that are very dear to me. The Metheny-Mays work First Circle speaks to me of ecstasy and joy and has been a favourite of mine since the first time I heard it. Third circle pays homage to that marvellous piece. As I had reached the mid-point of this piece in early 2020 [starting the piano solo to be exact], Lyle Mays died and the piano solo got a little longer. His musical mind assimilated so many kinds of music, and he helped create so many beautiful works that I think of him as one of the great musical minds of the late 20th century. Like First Circle, this piece is in an uneven metre and the majority of phrases have a “time keeping track” in one of the parts to help keep everything together.

GABRIEL FAURE Trio Op. 120 for violin, cello, and piano

I. Allegro ma non troppo

II. Andantino

III. Allegro vivo

Intermission

MICHAEL PEPA Okto Echoi (1983) for violin, guitar, cello and piano

Okto Echoi (Eight Echoes) is based on the 15th C. Serbian chant, NINJA SILI NEBESNIJE (Now the Celestial Powers) by domestikos kyr Stefan the Serb (c. 1459). In the Byzantine chant, a system of tonal classifications of eight echoi is collectively referred to as a octoechos. These are not abstract scale formations like the Western church modes, but are melodic formulae. Serbian liturgical chant has preserved the ancient system of the octoechos to the present day.

NINJA SILI is written in Mode II Plagal. According to the practise of composition in this style, kyr Stefan the Serb employs several melodic formulae of this mode which are repeated several times and follow each other without a fixed order. It is interesting to note that to work with traditional melodic formulae, is to take an ultraconservative view of one's function as a composer. It implies a deep-seated respect for tradition. At the same time, as pointed out by a noted Byzantine musicologist, Prof. Oliver Strunk, it is an enormously sophisticated way of working, susceptible of infinite refinement.

OKTO ECHOI refers to the eight melodic formulae of this hymn. Each formula is used as the basis for one of the movements of this work. In a sense, NINJA SILI is echoed in a new setting. This work was first performed in 1983 with William Beauvais on the guitar.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN Trio No. 1 in D minor for violin, cello, and piano

I. Molto allegro ed agitato

II. Andante con moto tranquillo

III. Scherzo- Leggiero e vivace

IV. Finale - Allegro assai appassionato

Performer Bios

JOYCE LAI, enjoys a career as a violin soloist, chamber musician and educator. She has been featured as guest artist with orchestras including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Szeged Symphony Orchestra of Hungary, the Canadian Chamber Academy, and the City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong. Locally, Joyce has been guest soloist with the Stratford Symphony Orchestra, Etobicoke Philharmonic, York Chamber Ensemble, Scarborough Philharmonic, as well as the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra. As an avid chamber musician, Joyce performs regularly in chamber settings and has participated in festivals both in Canada and abroad. Joyce has been greatly influenced by her musician parents- father Tak Ng Lai (with whom she started the violin as a child) and mother Aster Lai, a prominent piano pedagogue. In addition, she was a student of concert violinists Lucie Robert and Nelli Shkolnikova and credits her mentors with both her growth as a violinist and teacher. Joyce holds a Bachelor of Music Degree from the Manhattan School of Music and a Masters of Music and Performer Diploma from the Indiana University, Jacobs School of Music. As artistic director and concertmaster of the Canadian Sinfonietta, Joyce co-produced and recorded on their album "Canadian Mosaic." It can be heard on all the streaming services <https://srgils.lnk.to/rlkvwQ>

ANDRAS WEBER, received his musical training in Budapest, Hungary. His mentor, Janos Starker, has been a major influence in his work. He has been principal cellist with orchestras in Hungary, Mexico City and Canada. Has given concerts in North America, Europe, and Korea. He was the winner of DEBUT in Montreal where The Gazette called him a "generously gifted" musician who plays with a "nicely colored and singing tone." Mr. Weber has recorded in Hungary and Canada. Mr. Weber was the founding member and artistic director of the Toronto series 'Music Alive!' and teaches at the Royal Conservatory of Music. Currently he is principal cello of Sinfonia Toronto and Canadian Sinfonietta chamber orchestras. He has performed and premiered concertos with many orchestras around the world. Mr. Weber has toured in Hungary, appearing in recitals and chamber music ensembles and giving master classes. During the summers he often performs in Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec City in chamber music festivals.

Italian pianist **ERIKA CRINO** is very active both as a chamber musician and a soloist, as well as profoundly dedicated to teaching. Several of her performances have been featured on CBC Radio both as a soloist as well as in collaboration with percussionist Salvador Ferreras, clarinetist Francois Houle, pianist Brett Kingsbury, and with soprano Vania Chan. Since her move to Toronto, Erika has been regularly heard in several important venues, among which, several times at the Glenn Gould Studio where she also premiered Canadian composer Michael Pepa's TREMA with the Canadian Sinfonietta as well as his VARIAZIONI for piano and orchestra with the Croatian Cantus Ansambl. Dedicated to the performance of New Music, Erika has been invited to perform several times at the New Music Festival at the University of Toronto. Throughout the years, Erika has maintained also her presence in Italy performing at Teatro Marcello and Palazzo Sacchetti in Rome, Sala Corelli in Ravenna, Auditorium San Giacomo in Forlì, Teatro Dragoni in Meldola, Teatro Savio in Messina, the Istituto Mario Negri in Milano, as well as Sala Tripovich and Auditorium Revoltella in Trieste. She has been regularly invited to perform at the Guarnerius Hall in Belgrade, FUGA Series in Budapest, and at the New Music Festival in Chisinau (Moldavia). Erika is currently faculty at the Conservatorio Bonporti of Trento (Italy). Before relocating to Italy, she held the position of chamber music lecturer at the University of Toronto, Scarborough, and was member of the College of Examiners for the Royal Conservatory. After obtaining the Diploma in Piano with top marks at the conservatory of Trieste (Italy) and the Diploma in Chamber Music with the Trio di Trieste, Erika perfected her studies with Maestro Bruno Canino in Milan and in chamber music in Vienna. Shortly after, she moved to Canada where she completed her Bachelor in Piano Performance at the University of Victoria with Prof. Bruce Vogt, and her Master and Doctorate in Piano Performance with Dr. Robert Silverman at the University of British Columbia.

WILLIAM BEAUVAIS has been composing, recording, performing and improvising for over 50 years. He has written music for harpist Sharlene Wallace, baritone Doug MacNaughton, mezzo-soprano Maris Soulis, violinist Joyce Lai and the Oberon Guitar Trio. He has received support from the Toronto Arts Council, FACTOR and York University. An associate member of the Canadian Music Centre, his music has been heard in Denmark, Australia, Chile, and Argentina, and is also published by Les Productions D'OZ. His music has been recorded by Emma Rush - Canadiana, The Oberon Guitar Trio - Music of our Time, Doug MacNaughton - Guitarias, and Alan Rinehart - Dreams Laid Down. He has recorded several CD's of his own including Old Wood New Seeds, Unspoken Dreams: rumi stories [with storyteller Ariel Balevi], Invisible Cities [with a variety of musicians], A Bridge Beyond [with guitarist Stephen Wingfield, Bridges [with Brian Katz], Traces [with bassist George Koller and violist Julian Knight], and Dances and Romances for Violin [with violinist Moshe Hammer]. He has also recorded CDs with the Evergreen Club Gamelan, and composers Michael Hynes and Gerald Berg.

He has frequently recorded for radio, both for CBC and CKLN and as a performer William has worked with New Music Concerts, the Canadian Chamber Ensemble and Tapestry New Opera, giving first performances of music by George Crumb, Elliott Carter, Chris Paul Harman and Rodney Sharman. He was a featured artist with Jeunesses Musicales (Youth and Music) Canada, touring with them in 1983-84, and has performed over a hundred school concerts with the Toronto Symphony Education program.