

MetLife Foundation
Music of the Americas
Concert Series

**EXPONENTIAL ENSEMBLE
WITH ADASKIN STRING TRIO**



March 30, 2015

7:00 PM

**Americas Society
680 Park Avenue
New York**

Americas / SOCIETY

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MetLife Foundation



Cover images (L-R): University of Saskatchewan (Murray Adaskin), Sebastien Chambert (Osvaldo Golijov).

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EXPONENTIAL ENSEMBLE WITH ADASKIN STRING TRIO

PROGRAM

L. van Beethoven

String Trio in G Major, op. 9 no. 1 (1798)

I. Adagio - Allegro con brio

II. Adagio ma non tanto, e cantabile

III. Scherzo: Allegro presto

Murray Adaskin

Divertimento no. 9 for string trio (1998)

INTERMISSION

Oswaldo Golijov

The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind (1994)

EXPONENTIAL ENSEMBLE

Pascal Archer *clarinet*

Annie Trépanier *guest violinist*

ADASKIN STRING TRIO

Emlyn Ngai *violin*

Steve Larson *viola*

Mark Fraser *cello*

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About the program

L. van Beethoven (1770-1827), *String Trio in G Major, op. 9 no. 1* (1798)

Among the nobles who served as Beethoven's patrons after his arrival in Vienna in 1792 was Count Johann Georg von Browne-Camus. He is said to have squandered his fortune, and ended his days in a public institution. But in the mid-1790s, Beethoven received such generous support from Browne that he dedicated several works to him and his wife, including the three string trios of op. 9. In response, Browne presented Beethoven with a horse, which the preoccupied composer promptly forgot, thereby allowing his servant to rent out the beast and pocket the profits!

Dr. Richard E. Rodda's excellent description of the *String Trio in G Major*:

The G major Trio opens with a sonorous unison statement of the tonic arpeggio in slow tempo which is immediately balanced by a soft, feathery, sixteenth-note motive in the violin answered by tiny replies from the viola and cello. [...] The main theme comprises four small but distinct gestures: a quiet lyrical phrase; a quick upward-shooting scale; a rising arpeggio; and bold leaping chords. The Adagio is an extended and delicately elaborated song for which the designation "Romanze" might have been more appropriate. The music's lyricism suggests the influence of opera, a quality which its intensity of expression, often enhanced by a tender, pulsing accompaniment, only strengthens. The following Scherzo is lighter in mood and more deft in scoring than many of Beethoven's later movements in that form. The sonata-form finale contrasts a heady moto perpetuo main theme with an arching complementary melody in more sedate rhythms. [...] The work ends with a fiery coda that exploits the technical resources of the three instruments.

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Murray Adaskin, *Divertimento no. 9 for string trio* (1998)

Arranged from Serenade Concertante (1954) for string orchestra for the Adaskin String Trio.

Two years prior to the premiere performance, held on April 10, 1999 by the Adaskin String Trio at the Regina Conservatory of Music in Canada, the composer had received a phone call from a member of a string trio at McGill University. The three planned to continue their studies with the Emerson String Quartet in the United States during the ensuing two years, and were seeking a name for their ensemble that was truly Canadian. They asked permission to use the name "Adaskin," honoring John, Harry, and Murray for their contribution to the arts in Canada. As a high school student playing in the Regina Orchestra, Steve Larson (viola) had performed the *Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra* and liked it instantly.

With that experience, and out of high regard for the Adaskin family, the name “The Adaskin Trio” seemed right for them. The pleasure Murray Adaskin felt was best reflected in his response: “My father would have been so proud.” Consequently, he wanted to show his appreciation to the Trio, so he wrote a piece dedicated to them.

This work is in one movement, marked *moderato*. The work upon which it was based, *Serenade Concertante*, was conceived to sustain a vast palette of instrumental effects within the chamber medium. Adaskin had been studying Mozart’s works at the time. A critic in the *Detroit Free Press* wrote: “The melodic contours are definitely of our time, but the composer is not loath to employ conventional means such as ending the entire work with a textbook resolution.” This work has since become a part of the standard repertoire of Canadian orchestras.

Murray Adaskin (1906-2002) was a member of a distinguished Canadian family which included Gordon Adaskin, painter; musician brothers the late John and Harry Adaskin; his late wife, Frances James, soprano. Born in Toronto, where he started his musical studies, Adaskin continued further work in New York and Paris. He was a violinist for ten years with Toronto Symphony and studied composition with John Weinzweig, Charles Jones and Darius Milhaud. Adaskin was appointed Head of the Department of Music at the University of Saskatchewan from 1952 to 1966 when he became Composer-in-Residence until 1972 (the first composer to receive this post at a Canadian university). Dr. Adaskin helped make Saskatoon a major center for the performance of contemporary Canadian music by conducting the Saskatoon Symphony for five years, commissioning new works, and organizing concerts of Canadian music. He was appointed to the Canada Council from 1966-1969, and retired to Victoria in 1973 where he composed his final work in 2000.

About his compositional work, the composer wrote:

It is difficult enough to write music, but trying to explain it is even more challenging. Music, it seems to me, should reflect the personal voice of its composer. Having said that, I cannot say precisely how that is done. Perhaps when a composer has learned his craft and knows the work of composers past and present he is then free to be his own person, to say or write what is true for himself.

My great wish and dream is that the music I write might be recognizably mine. Canada is the home of my birth and of my life’s work.

My music comes from my Canadian experience. It is not for me to say, but I would dearly love should the following quote from Leonard Isaacs be true when he stated in a CBC commentary on my Algonquin Symphony: "...the texture is rather spare – the lines of the music are clear and clean, and the interstices are devoid of lush undergrowth. There is a feeling of great space and distance – not lacking in some asperity. Just as Aaron Copland's music is very American, so is Murray Adaskin's Symphony in some true but intangible way, very Canadian."

Oswaldo Golijov (b. 1960), *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* (1994)

Oswaldo Golijov grew up in an Eastern European Jewish household in La Plata, Argentina. Born to a piano teacher mother and physician father, Golijov was raised surrounded by classical chamber music, Jewish liturgical and klezmer music, and the new tango of Astor Piazzolla. After studying piano at the local conservatory and composition with Gerardo Gandini he moved to Israel in 1983, where he studied with Mark Kopytman at the Jerusalem Rubin Academy and immersed himself in the colliding musical traditions of that city. Upon moving to the United States in 1986, Golijov earned his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied with George Crumb, and was a fellow at Tanglewood, studying with Oliver Knussen.

In January and February 2006 Lincoln Center presented a sold-out festival called "The Passion of Oswaldo Golijov", featuring multiple performances of his major works, his chamber music, and late night programs of music dear to him. In 2007 he was named first composer-in-residence at the Mostly Mozart Festival. He has also been composer-in-residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Spoleto USA Festival, the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Music Alive series, Marlboro Music, Ravinia, Ojai, Trondheim and Holland festivals. For the 2012-13 season, Golijov holds the Richard and Barbara Debs Composer's Chair at Carnegie Hall in New York. Golijov is Loyola Professor of Music at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, where he has taught since 1991. He also taught for several years at Tanglewood, has led workshops at Carnegie Hall with Dawn Upshaw and teaches in the summers at the Sundance Composers Lab.

About the work, the composer writes:

Eight centuries ago Isaac The Blind, the great kabbalist rabbi of Provence, dictated a manuscript in which he asserted that all things and events in the universe are product of combinations of the Hebrew alphabet's letters: "Their root is in a name, for the letters are like branches, which appear in he manner of flickering flames, mobile, and nevertheless linked to the coal."

His conviction still resonates today: don't we have scientists who believe that the clue to our life and fate is hidden in other codes?

Isaac's lifelong devotion to his art is as striking as that of string quartets and klezmer musicians. In their search for something that arises from tangible elements but transcends them, they are all reaching a state of communion. Gershom Scholem, the preeminent scholar of Jewish mysticism, says that "Isaac and his disciples do not speak of ecstasy, of a unique act of stepping outside oneself in which human consciousness abolishes itself. Debhequth (communion) is a constant state, nurtured and renewed through meditation." If communion is not the reason, how else would one explain the strange life that Isaac led, or the decades during which groups of four souls dissolve their individuality into single, higher organisms, called string quartets? How would one explain the chain of klezmer generations that, while blessing births, weddings, and burials, were trying to discover the melody that could be set free from itself and become only air, spirit, *ruakh*?

The movements of this work sound to me as if written in three of the different languages spoken by the Jewish people throughout our history. This somehow reflects the composition's epic nature. I hear the prelude and the first movement, the most ancient, in Aramaic; the second movement is in Yiddish, the rich and fragile language of a long exile; the third movement and postlude are in sacred Hebrew.

The prelude and the first movement simultaneously explore two prayers in different ways: The quartet plays the first part of the central prayer of the High Holidays, 'We will observe the mighty holiness of this day..', while the clarinet dreams the motifs from *Avinu Malkeinu* (*Our Father, Our King*). The second movement is based on *The Old Klezmer Band*, a traditional dance tune, which is surrounded here by contrasting manifestations of its own halo.

The third movement was written before all the others. It is an instrumental version of *K'Vakarot*, a work that I wrote a few years ago for Kronos and Cantor Misha Alexandrovich. The meaning of the word klezmer: instrument of song, becomes clear when one hears David Krakauer's interpretation of the cantor's line. This movement, together with the postlude, bring to conclusion the prayer left open in the first movement: '...Thou pass and record, count and visit, every living soul, appointing the measure of every creature's life and decreeing its destiny'.

But blindness is as important in this work as dreaming and praying. I had always the intuition that, in order to achieve the highest possible intensity in a performance, musicians should play, metaphorically speaking, 'blind'. That is why, I think, all legendary bards in cultures around the world, starting with Homer, are said to be blind. 'Blindness' is probably the secret of great string quartets, those who don't need their eyes to communicate among them, with the music, or the audience. My homage to all of them and Isaac of Provence is this work for blind musicians, so they can play it by heart. Blindness, then, reminded me of how to compose music as it was in the beginning: An art that springs from and relies on our ability to sing and hear, with the power to build castles of sound in our memories.

About the artists

Hailed by the New York Times as "outstanding clarinetist", **Pascal Archer** leads an active career as a chamber musician, orchestral player and teaching artist. He is the founder and artistic director of Exponential Ensemble, a mixed chamber music ensemble inspired by music and mathematics. He is currently Principal Clarinet and board member of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic and Principal Clarinet of the Long Island Philharmonic. He is also a former member of the New World Symphony where he performed for four seasons under the baton of Michael Tilson Thomas.

In recent years he has collaborated with the JACK and St. Lawrence string quartets, New York Wind Soloists, Adaskin String Trio and toured with Musicians from Marlboro. He has performed at renowned festivals such as Marlboro, Mostly Mozart, Monadnock, UBS Verbier Orchestra, Spoleto USA and the Sun Valley Summer Symphony where he performed under the baton of James Levine, Charles Dutoit and David Robertson.

Mr. Archer is on faculty at the Manhattan School of Music Precollege Division, the Hunter College (CUNY), Fordham University and the New York Summer Music Festival. Originally from Quebec, Canada, Mr. Archer holds a degrees from the Conservatoire de Musique de Montréal, Université de Montréal (BM), Indiana University and a Masters in orchestral performance from the Manhattan School of Music. His former teachers include Jean Laurendeau, André Moisan, Eli Eban and Mark Nuccio.

The dynamic **Adaskin String Trio**, all natives of Canada, met in Montreal as students of founding Orford Quartet cellist Marcel Saint-Cyr. They were ensemble-in-residence at The Hartt School (CT) for two years, where they worked with the Emerson Quartet. The ensemble takes its name from Murray Adaskin, one of Canada's most loved and respected composers, and his brothers, also important figures in the Canadian music scene. Currently based in New England, the trio commands a large string trio repertoire encompassing Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven to Dohnany, Rozsa, Villa-Lobos, Schnittke, and many contemporary composers, including commissioned works from Murray Adaskin, Robert Carl, and David Macbride, among others. The trio also collaborates frequently with other musicians, including pianist Sally Pinkas, with whom they have performed masterworks from the piano quartet repertoire; recent collaborations include oboist Thomas Gallant, guitarist Eliot Fisk, bassist Robert Black, and accordion virtuoso Joseph Petric, with whom they commissioned Raymond Luedeke's *Tango Dreams*. The trio recorded the complete Beethoven String Trios (Musica Omnia) to critical acclaim from the American Record Guide ("Highly desirable...strongly recommended") and Gramophone: "Superb playing...a flexible command of flow and phrase with instrumental power and eloquence and a nutty tonal richness...the Trio savours the sensuality of Beethoven's string writing and the intoxicating profusion of tunes while plumbing the emotional depths that lie beneath." In 2008, MSR Classics released a recording of Adaskin and Pinkas performing Fauré's piano quartets.

Violinist **Annie Trépanier's** playing has been hailed by *The Boston Globe* as "supercharged, clear-headed, yet soulful." She is a founding member of the acclaimed Avery Ensemble and has performed throughout Canada, the United States, and Europe. She is regularly broadcasted on Radio Canada, CBC, and NPR and has recorded for CRI, New World, Ongaku, and Zephyr. She is a former member of the New World Trio and the Diabelli String Quartet and has appeared as a guest in the Copenhagen and Adaskin String Trios. She holds degrees from McGill University, University of Ottawa, and The Hartt School, and she studied chamber music with members of the Orion, Emerson, Cleveland, and Orford String Quartets. Trépanier is currently on faculty of the Hotchkiss School and performs and teaches every summer at the Wintergreen Festival in Virginia.

Canadian music at Music of the Americas: A History

Over the last decade, Music Director Sebastián Zubieta has integrated Canadian composers, performers, and organizations into our series at Americas Society. Inuit throat-singer Tanya Tagaq, the critically-acclaimed, Banff International String Quartet Competition (BISQC) winners Jupiter, Tin Alley, Cecilia and Dover String Quartets, and the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne rank among the musical luminaries that we have presented over the years. We have also featured the work of R. Murray Schaefer at Central Park Lake as part of the annual outdoor musical extravaganza Make Music New York.



Dover String Quartet at Americas Society, October 2014. Image by Roey Yohai.

MetLife Foundation Music of the Americas Concert Series

About the concert series

Since 1965, the **Music of the Americas Concert Series** has presented musical luminaries such as Plácido Domingo, Antonio Meneses, Mercedes Sosa, Egberto Gismonti, Hermeto Pascoal, Continuum Ensemble, Bobby Sanabria, Inti-Illimani, Cuarteto Latinoamericano, Jaime Loredó, the Spanish Harlem Orchestra, Tanya Tagaq, and many others.

MetLife Foundation Music of the Americas concerts take place at Americas Society's headquarters and partnering organizations across New York City. The concert series brings together an ever-expanding urban audience with consistently high-caliber musicians from across the hemisphere, showcasing oft-underrepresented music and rendering it immediate and accessible.



The Bishop's Band at Trinity Wall Street, December 2014. Image by Roey Yohai.

Colombian vocalist Lucía Pulido: Canciones de Despecho

On Thursday, February 12th, just in time for Valentine's Day, Music of the Americas presents Colombian vocalist Lucía Pulido in "Canciones de Despecho" (Songs of Broken Love), a program of Latin American love songs made popular from the 1930s to the 1960s by Julio Jaramillo and Cuco Sanchez, among others. The central motif of this set of boleros and waltzes is the intense pain produced by unrequited love. With Sergio Reyes, violin and melodica; Sebastian Cruz, guitar; and Pedro Giraudo, bass.

Colombian singer Lucía Pulido has an experimental style marked with a distinct sophistication and has participated in a diverse range of projects, from traditional Colombian music to jazz and world music. The New York Times raved: "Ms. Pulido holds on to the rawness of the original melodies while giving them a sophisticated new context." From traditional genres such as *cumbia* and *bullerengue* from the Atlantic coast, *currulaos* from the Pacific coast, to *zoropos* from the Colombian eastern plains, Pulido's repertoire extends to herding songs (*cantos de vaquería*), funeral laments (*alabaos*), and harvest chants (*cantos de zafra*), enabling her to explore her full range of expression.



Design for "Canciones de Despecho," courtesy Lucía Pulido.

A Look Ahead to 2015

Music Director Sebastián Zubieta quietly celebrated ten seasons at Americas Society, and this spring highlights several significant developments:

Our relationship with Teatro Colón's Centro de Experimentación expands with a fully staged production of the new opera *Hércules en el Matto Grosso*, which Zubieta conducted in Buenos Aires this past November. Featuring sopranos Sarah Brailey and Alice Teyssier, Buenos Aires-based baritone Alejandro Spies, and pianist Taka Kigawa, with set design by Mateo Paiva;

Our outdoor extravaganza in Central Park for Make Music New York features a site-specific world premiere by Brazilian female composer Valéria Bonafé;

International Contemporary Ensemble returns with a world premiere by Argentine luminary Mario Davidovsky, who came out of retirement to complete this piece, dedicated by Zubieta himself.

Join us!



Luna Paiva's set design at the CETC, November 2014.

MetLife Foundation
Music of the Americas
Concert Series

SPRING/SUMMER 2015

Monday, January 26
7 pm
Exponential Ensemble with Adaskin String Trio
Beethoven, Adaskin, Golijov

Thursday, February 12
7 pm
Colombian vocalist Lucía Pulido
Canciones de Despecho: Songs of heartbreak

Tuesday, February 24
7 pm
Cuban pianist Willanny Darias, piano
Schumann, Albéniz, León, Ginastera

Thursday, March 5
7 pm
Arakaendar: Music from Bolivian Jesuit Missions
@Hispanic Society of America

Friday, March 13
7 pm
International Contemporary Ensemble
Argentine composer Mario Davidovsky

Friday, April 24
7 pm
Teen ensemble Face the Music
New music from Puerto Rico

Monday, April 27
7 pm
Bishops Band: Music of Gaspar Fernandes
@Hispanic Society of America

Tuesday, May 5
7 pm
Argentine folk singers Juan Quintero & Luna
Monti with special guest Miguel Zanon

Monday, May 11
7 pm
Flutist Wendy Mehne & Guitarist Pablo Cohen
New music for flute and guitar

Wednesday, May 20
7 pm
Hércules en el Mato Grosso: US premiere
@Dixon Place

Sunday, June 21
time TBD
Make Music New York: Valéria Bonafé Premiere
@Central Park

Tuesday, June 30
7 pm
Peruvian guitarist Jorge Caballero
New York Guitar Seminar

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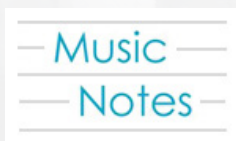
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- Bring one or more guests free of charge to members-only and VIP culture events.



Eddy Marcano Cuarteto Acústico

Music of the Americas has released its first ever CD available under the Live at Music of the Americas label! Recorded live at Americas Society in 2009 and produced by Americas Society's own Sebastián Zubietta, the CD features Eddy Marcano Cuarteto Acústico and is available for download on **iTunes**, **Amazon**, and other stores.



Music Notes is a continuing series of online articles that looks at recent concerts in the Music of the Americas Series. Available at the Americas Society website, the articles showcase videos, photos, and audio from the concerts, and discuss issues and ideas brought up by the artists and the music.

Visit www.as-coa.org/music for more information.

Americas Society is the premier forum dedicated to education, debate and dialogue in the Americas. Its mission is to foster an understanding of the contemporary political, social and economic issues confronting Latin America, the Caribbean and Canada, and to increase public awareness and appreciation of the diverse cultural heritage of the Americas and the importance of the inter-American relationship.

Visit our website www.as-coa.org/music
for more information on Music of the Americas Spring 2015 Events!

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