

THE NEW CANON

SEPTEMBER 16, 2024

HERITAGE HALL

ILY MATTHEW MANIANO Amihan

JOANNE METCALF

The Sea's Wash in the Hollow of the Heart

IAN CUSSON will I, night

SHIREEN ABU-KHADER Yumma

DOMINIQUE FILS-AIMÉ To Walk A Way

SHERRYL SEWEPAGAHAM Mitosak

NICHOLAS RYAN KELLY You Speak Violets

LESLIE UYEDA Small Elegy

TRACY WONG Singkap Siaga

MUSICA INTIMA PERFORMS AND OPERATES ON THE STOLEN
TERRITORY OF THE COAST SALISH PEOPLES, INCLUDING
THE TERRITORIES OF THE $x^w m\theta\theta k^w \acute{a}y\acute{a}m$ (MUSQUEAM),
 $s\grave{k}w\acute{x}w\acute{u}7mesh \acute{u}xwumixw$ (SQUAMISH),
AND $s\grave{a}l\grave{i}l\acute{w}\acute{a}t\acute{a}7\ddot{t}$ (TSLEIL-WAUTUTH) NATIONS.

musica intima

Sofia Avelino
John Carpenter
Lee Clapp
Sam Dabrusin
Katherine Evans
Jacob Gramit
Anja Kelly
Kate Medcalf
Danny Najjar
Lucy Smith
Gloria Wan
Jaime Yoon

Artistic Manager

Jacob Gramit

Operations Manager

Lucy Smith

Board of Directors

Troy Topnik, PRESIDENT
Anne Louise Aboud, DIRECTOR
Katherine Evans, SINGERS REP
Brigid Lumholst-Smith, DIRECTOR
Dan McFaul, TREASURER

Are you enthusiastic about musica intima and passionate about decolonization in the arts? Talk to us about getting involved with our Board of Directors - now is the time you can help us make a difference! Introduce yourself tonight or email lucy@musicaintima.org!

THE NEW CANON is supported by the Province of British Columbia, and the BC Fairs, Festivals, and Events initiative.

musica intima GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF



Supported by the Province of British Columbia

A MESSAGE FROM ARTISTIC MANAGER *Jacob Gramit*

All the music you'll hear tonight was written in the last five years. Some of it doesn't sound that way – Metcalf's 'Sea's Wash' echoes medieval harmonies; Abu-Khader's 'Yumma' comes from an old Arabic folk tradition, and Sewepagaham's music is inspired by the textless songs which have been sung for millennia on the unceded lands we perform on tonight. The program loosely revolves around nature and human connection; our kinship with the natural world, how we relate to each other and what we find in ourselves. More than that, though, this music represents the 'New Canon' that *musica intima* is striving to build. We seek out and befriend composers, we love to dive into new sound worlds, and we champion music that has a personal story to share.

So tonight, you'll hear a variety of sounds, some familiar, and some new. Some will resonate deep inside you. Some will remind you of your favorite works, and some will defy your expectations. Ultimately, we hope to challenge and comfort, to awaken, and to soothe. The world of new choral music is thrilling – and each song has a beautiful story. We invite you to dive into these stories with us, as we share these moments tonight – together, building the 'New Canon' the showcases the incredible humans behind contemporary choral art; creating, performing, and witnessing!

Join us for the rest of our 2024-2025 season...

SOLICITUDE | DECEMBER 14 2024

music to shine in the darkest winter, with Russell Wallace

DING DONG | DECEMBER 23 2024

an a cappella twist on a seasonal favourite!

WHERE YOU GO | MAY 2 2025

with choreographer Olivia C. Davies

CONFLUENCE | JULY 2025

curated by Teiya Kasahara

details at www.musicaintima.org

Amihan

Ily Matthew Maniano

musica intima was lucky to work with the world-renowned Philippine Madrigal Singers when we were on tour in the spring. Together we performed 'Omaa Biindig' by Andrew Balfour (which you can see on our YouTube channel!), and it was through Madz that we were introduced to the music of alumnus Ily Matthew Maniano, one of the foremost composers of choral music in the Philippines.

'Amihan' speaks of a person conversing with the wind, seeking comfort and guidance by blowing the worries away. Regardless of the cold breeze it brings, the speaker also asks to keep the fire of passion (in the heart) ablaze, and for discernment and guidance to take a clear path moving forward.

Amihan is a Filipino word referring to the northeast monsoon, a cool and dry northeast wind coming from the regions of Siberia and northern China. This is characterized with slight rainfall and a prevailing cold wind that brings pleasant weather and pleasing temperatures in the northern and eastern part of the Philippines. 'Amihan' has a minimalist approach and consists of two melodies that echo the speaker and the receiver. Aleatoric elements are also an allusion to the joys and surprises that wind or life may bring. (IMM)

| | |
|--|--|
| Hanging Amihan, yakapin mo, balutin mo, ingatan mo kami. | <i>Amihan, embrace, cover, protect us.</i> |
|--|--|

| | |
|---|--|
| Sa simoy na 'yong dala, diwa nawa'y mapalaya't bigyang alab aming mga puso | <i>May the breeze that you bring, free our minds and keep our hearts ablaze.</i> |
|---|--|

| | |
|--|---|
| Hanging Amihan, hilumin mo, akayin mo, aluin mo kami sa bawat ihip ng 'yong hangin. | <i>Amihan, heal, lead, comfort us in every gust of your wind.</i> |
|--|---|

The Sea's Wash in the Hollow of the Heart

Joanne Metcalf / Denise Levertov

"The Sea's Wash in the Hollow of the Heart..." was first published in 1946 in Denise Levertov's debut collection, The Double Image, when the poet was twenty-three years old. The poem is an invocation that is magical and incantatory in nature, and I have tried to capture that musically. Two primary musical textures alternate: a rhythmic incantation that starts softly and mysteriously, then grows in intensity over the course of the work; and a melismatic, contrapuntal texture of cascading suspensions, inspired by the great polyphonic music of the Renaissance.

Levertov's rich imagery exhorts the listener to "let in new suns / that beat and echo in the mind like sounds / risen from sunken cities lost to fear." The poet asks us to leave behind a fearful past; to embrace the promise of what might be revealed; and to let in the life-transforming light concealed in "the hollow of the heart." (JM)

Turn from that road's beguiling ease; return
to your hunger's turret. Enter, climb the stair
chill with disuse, where the croaking toad of time
regards from shimmering eyes your slow ascent
and the drip, drip, of darkness glimmers on the stone
to show you how your longing waits alone.
What alchemy shines from under that shut door,
spinning out gold from the hollow of the heart?

Enter the turret of your love, and lie
close in the arms of the sea; let in new suns
that beat and echo in the mind like sounds
risen from sunken cities lost to fear;
let in the light that answers your desire
awakening at midnight with the fire,
until its magic burns the wavering sea
and flames caress the windows of your tower.

will I, night

Ian Cusson / Marilyn Dumont

Cree/Métis poet Marilyn Dumont's 'will I, night' unfolds almost like a dream – blurring the lines between the reality we are living in and our memories of the past. Once again, Cusson's talent for vocal writing and careful text setting bring these remarkable words to life. A constant push and pull -both in tempo and harmonic density – lead us to the final question: "will I, night / swell with your thickness or / dissolve in your black mouth?"

I shy from the familiar in these woods where
I'm alone, here my body
is a wafer of itself, here
I am pitiful, not the striding city gal but
the timid green girl
my feet thin and dumb
I hold each breath until it is clasped
to the next like hands
of kindergarten children crossing a street

when I listen, I'm afraid of what I might hear, if
I follow the sound of the chainsaw
will I find my father
will he hear me
over the sound of his cutting?
if I follow the scent of blackberries
will my mother be picking
her lard-pail full and tied to her waist?
and if she sees me, will she run spilling them
her eyes straining back like a startled deer?
and if she bolts, will I run after
bawling like her calf?
and if I lose sight of her
will I, night
swell with your thickness or
dissolve in your black mouth?

Yumma*arr. Shireen Abu-Khader*

Yumma is a familiar tune to any Palestinian. It symbolizes traditions and politics and is tinged with nostalgia and longing. Yumma is originally an Aramaic Canaanite word meaning my mother.

There are two schools of thought as to how this song originated. The first claims it originated during the British Mandate for Palestine (1848-1923). The second claims it was composed much earlier and morphed from a love song into a political one expressing dignity and resistance through changes to its lyrics. The arranger, Shireen Abu-Khader, decided to work on this song out of love for its simple melody. As a Palestinian living in Canada, the fact that a simple melody can transform lyrically and musically over time resonated with her and felt relevant even to this day. Immigration, the departure and the journey; a narrative that many have had to endure throughout history until this day. The question here is: how do we carry "home" with us? How can we hold on to the important values our mothers and grandmothers instilled in us? Those questions came to the forefront during the process of composing.

It is customary for many folk songs to use verses from other songs. In this composition, Shireen Abu-Khader used a well-known folkloric lyric to evoke the physical departure from a location, the movement and the crossing of the Jordan River. The second verse honors the olive tree, which symbolizes deep roots, perseverance and connection to our ancestors, grandmothers and mothers. These roots are carried within us no matter where we go. (SA-K)

O Mother, this chant of love is my chant!

The iron bridge got destroyed
from the stomping of my feet
I walked under the rain
and it drenched me
And when summer came,
it set me ablaze.

I have devoted my life
to the cause of freedom
O mother! This chant of love is my chant
O grandmother!
I carry the olive seed in my roots
O mother!
I carry the olive seed in my roots.

يُمَّا مُوَيْلِ الْهَوَى يُمَّا مُوَيْلِيَا
جِسْرِ الْحَدِيدِ انْقَطَعُ مِنْ دُوسِ رَجَلِيَا
وَمَشِيئَتِ تَحْتِ الشِّتَا وَالشِّتَا رَوَانِي
وَالضَّيْفُ لَمَّا أَتَى وَلَقِيَ مِنْ نِيرَانِي
بِضَلِّ عُمْرِي انْفَدَى نِدْرٌ لِلْحَرِيَّةِ
يُمَّا مُوَيْلِ الْهَوَى يُمَّا مُوَيْلِيَا
بِذْرِ الزَّيْتُونَةِ يَا سِنِّي مَحْمُولِ بَأْضَلِي
بِذْرِ الزَّيْتُونَةِ يُمَّا مَحْمُولِ بَأْضَلِي

To Walk A Way

Dominique Fils-Aimé

Contemporary jazz singer Dominique Fils-Aimé released her critically acclaimed album, “Our Roots Run Deep” in 2023. Described as having ‘a loose, dreamlike narrative structure that tells a story of growth’ the album is filled with rhythmic and melodic explorations and improvisations – Fils-Aimé is a Canadian vocalist with idea and skill like few others! *To Walk A Way* was arranged for our tour last spring – the jubilant ostinato and beautiful layerings evoke a tree with roots grounded in self exploration, and winds of change moving us forward.

To walk a way that leaves the pain behind,
To walk a way; leave it all behind

To walk a way to see the joy inside,
To walk a way; bring the joy you hide,

Mítosak

Sherryl Sewepagaham

My Cree parents speak of how trees are important to the survival of the Cree people. Trees provide navigation when hunting and travelling; moss grows on the northside of the tree, away from the sun. Wood is used for teepee and tent poles, canoes, paddles, toboggans, snowshoes, containers, rattle handles, drum frames, and whistles. Leaves and bark are used as medicines for various ailments. Sap is used for sweetening syrup as well as glues for sealants and patching of canoes. Spruce bows are used inside tents and teepees for flooring and poplar trees provide protective shade from the sun. When trees are harvested, tobacco is offered and prayers are said to acknowledge the precious gifts trees have provided. Trees represent the transformation of life stages from root to leaf. (SS)

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mítosak, | <i>Trees,</i> |
| kinkamôstamâtinâwaw | <i>I sing to you</i> |
| Nikinosin | <i>I stand tall</i> |
| kawícikâpawîstatakawaw | <i>beside you</i> |
| Moya nitastâsin | <i>I am not afraid</i> |
| kawícikâpawîstatakawaw | <i>when I stand beside you</i> |
| Kinawâhpim. Ohpiko mítosis. | <i>Look. Little tree is growing.</i> |

You Speak Violets

Nicholas Ryan Kelly / Shannon Bramer

BC-based composer Nicholas Ryan Kelly was a participant in our 2024 novum musica program – a mentorship program for emerging choral composers. We had originally programed the piece he wrote for that program, but he suggested another work, which we fell in love with instantly, and are excited to share tonight.

The text for this piece comes from Climbing Shadows: Poems for Children by Canadian poet Shannon Bramer. Each poem was written for a different child in a kindergarten class the poet worked with, and many of them evoke the children's personalities quite vividly.

The child in this poem is quiet, but clearly has a lot going on inside. So to me, this piece is about seeing and exploring this child's vibrant inner world: the deep wells of imagination and emotion that lie beneath a shy, placid surface.

I was once such a child myself (and am now, in many ways, a quiet adult). How freeing and validating it would have been to have heard this piece's sentiments back then! For those of us without a knack for words, music and the arts can be a powerful way to communicate our experiences--and I hope this piece gives voice to the forests, waterfalls, and (yes) violets blooming, unspoken, in many an introverted mind. (NRK)

sometimes you are quiet as a trillium yet your eyes speak
the language of wild basil red butterflies impatient
for a buzzing loud summer you've got a young forest inside you
i see waterfalls beyond tall white sleeping trees
birches poplars where everything is moving and alive

i see rushing water in your eyes when you get a new idea
sun through the branches making shadows inside you
when you find it hard to say what you are feeling

Small Elegy

Leslie Uyeda / Patrick Lane

Vancouver composer Leslie Uyeda has been a friend of *musica intima* since our first commission of her in 2009 – ‘Small Elegy’ was premiered about a year ago, and she’s currently working on a third work for us, to be premiered in July. Uyeda’s compositional practice focuses on opera and art song, and her music, like Cusson’s, is so incredibly sing-able, making it a joy to work on. Uyeda’s first work set a poem of BC poet Lorna Crozier, and this work features poetry of Crozier’s late husband, Patrick Lane.

I would like to thank musica intima for commissioning ‘Small Elegy’. This great poem means a lot to me. It was written by the late poet, author, and friend, Patrick Lane, and it speaks acutely to the dire situation we find ourselves in this world today. I have dedicated this new work to the memory of Vancouver composer and friend Jocelyn Morlock, who died recently, leaving so many of us in the music community heartbroken. I do not mean for ‘Small Elegy’ to be depressing. I hope it can be sung with heart and healing for all of us. (LU)

The silence of the dead is what we own.
It’s why we sing. The sky is clear today.
Go on, I hear my father say, my mother too,
and though they rest in sunken graves
I hear them still. The sky is clear today,
the harvest weeks away and no forests burn.
The dead sing in the rubble and the fires.
We must listen to their song.
Their burden is our lives.
We pray because we cannot turn away.

Singkap Siaga

Tracy Wong

I drew inspiration from the almost-extinct Malay tradition of shadow puppet theatre and its music - Wayang Kulit Kelantan. I remember learning how to make these puppets in school in Malaysia. This artform reminded me how light and shadow are equal in beauty, thus shifting my perspective of “shadow” and “darkness” having negative connotations. Throughout my research on this tradition, I have been drawn to a scene in the show where the Dewa Panah (two Arrow Gods, one good and one evil) descend from the sky and battle each other. Neither wins. Life goes on in a balance.

The piece is 5% text (Singkap Siaga) and 95% vocables, based on the pre-existing vocal equivalent of the stylings and tone of the traditional instruments used in the Wayang Kulit Kelantan shadow puppet theatre practice - gong, dak, ding, dong, tsak, tsng. The rhythmic elements and patterns are also inspired by the music accompanying the Dewa Panah scene. Together with body percussion, this piece has a gutsy and fiery energy that hopefully brings singers and listeners to a positive headspace. (TW)

Singkap - to open, reveal, quickly change

Siaga - ever ready

*musica intima most sincerely
wishes to thank our donors for
their unwavering support.*

Music can create incredible experiences, and musica intima exists to create these moments - to foster human connection through the power of vocal music.

Your support of the ensemble's performance, outreach and community building is crucial.

musica intima is unique in many ways, but like all non-profit arts organizations, we are facing new and more severe fiscal challenges - we are not immune to inflation, and there are no more COVID-related financial supports from government granting agencies, despite rising expenses, and revenues that still remain far below pre-pandemic levels. We love to make music, and the best part of that is sharing it with you - online, on a CD, or at a concert - but the fiscal realities of our little society are making that harder and harder.

*We are a small organization - your dollars go far! Part of what makes us unique in the Canadian choral landscape, and especially here at home is that **we don't have corporate sponsors, and our grant funding is a fraction of what many performers or presenters receive.** Despite this, we continue to produce ground-breaking art at home and across the country, with 85% of our budget devoted to the expenses of making music (the average among choral organizations in Canada being 64%). In this new reality, however, some of these groundbreaking projects are in jeopardy.*

***You know how special musica intima is** - there is no other professional ensemble in Canada that is created for the artists, by the artists - and you know how special the shared connection is when you join us for our performances. Help us continue to share that here, across the province, and across Turtle Island.*

Your financial gifts sustain us, and without your support, we cannot continue sharing the music that comforts, excites, and challenges you.

MUSICA INTIMA *Donors*

INTIMATES (\$1000 OR ABOVE)

Sandra Campbell
Canadian Music Centre - BC
Ashley Daniel Foot
Martha Lou Henley
Karen Gordon & Martin Smith
J. Evan Kreider IN MEMORY OF ALAN KREIDER
Brigid Lumholz-Smith & Andy Smith
Rob Mayhew
Dan McFaul & Connie McElman

IN MEMORY OF DAVID WELLHAM

Lucy Smith & Jacob Gramit
Troy Topnik
David & Frieda Woodruff Gramit

ARTIST'S CIRCLE (\$500-\$999)

Lisa Brasso
Christina Burrige
Joanna Dundas
Ed & Elaine Gramit
Christer Hallberg
Liz & Keith Hamel
Don Harder
Lynn Kagan
David Klaassen

IN MEMORY OF LOUISE KLAASSEN

Jan Lowcock
Elizabeth McLenehan
Maxine Shu

PERFORMANCE CIRCLE

(TO \$499)

Anne Aboud
Chris Aikenhead &
Candace Knighton
Janet Allwork
Debra Anderson
Anonymous (7)
Barbra Arnold
Sam & Mary Balden
Alison Beale
Jeremy Berkman
Caitlin & Robert Beaupré
Allan & Elizabeth Bell
Bruce Beier
Jan Berney
Sean Bickerton
Ulrike Boege
Ann Cameron &
Martin Landmann
Anne Cameron
Diana Carter
Jan Constantinescu
Stephen Cooke
Dandy Barber, Inc.
Oliver Dalton
Kirsten Daub
Shannon Daub
Shelagh Davies
Barbara Devlin
Kerry Dyer
Mary Eggertson
Peter Elliott
Linda Emigh
Varick Ernst
Lise Faillottaz
Eric Findlay
Charles & Lucile Flavelle
Allen & Ruth Fowls

Richard & Grace Fraser
Patricia French
Russ & Star Fuoco
Dale Gamble &
Jane McFadgen
Karen Gelmon
John Gordon &
Mirjana Galovich
Robin Grabell
Kim Hardy
Derek Healey
Joshua Hendricksen
Darby Honeyman
Chloé Hurst
Douglas Jameson
Elsie & Audrey Jang Fund

HELD AT THE VANCOUVER FDN.

Patricia Janzen
Karin Johnson
Margo Keenan
Karen Mang Kennedy
Beryl Kirk
Kris Klaasen
Yolande Lafleur
Darlene Lamb
Simon LeSieur
Erica Levy
Stephanie MacLeod
Barbara Madani
Melanie Marchand
Andrew & Liz Massil
Karen Matthews
John McBain
Harvey McLeod
Shawn McKenzie
Carolyn McKindred
David McMurtry

Patti McVey
Nonie & Iain Medcalf
Ivar Mickelson
Laura Munn
Barbara & Terry Myers
Brenda Naylor
James Neville
Louise Nicholson
Woodward
Sumiko Nishizawa
Patricia Phillips
Robert Picard
Carman J. Price
Ann Ramsay &
Chris Pollard
Kelly Rayter
Shane Riczu
Geordie & Frances Roberts
Manako Roberts
E. Jane Robertson
Deirdre Rogers
Deborah Rollins
Ingrid Rose
Emmanuelle Rousseau
Byron Schenkman
Jim & Donna Simpson
Debra Sloan & Terry Yip
Edward Stringer
Leigh & Nancy Taylor
Liz Tuck
Olga Volkoff
Alex Vollant
Stefan von Dehn
Cindy Weisbart
Tom Whalley
Elizabeth White
James Wright