

# 2014/2015 CONCERT SERIES



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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR  
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## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

My love affair with Latin America began in June 2009. On the spur of the moment, I decided to attend the ISPA Congress (International Society for the Performing Arts), held that year in São Paulo, Brazil. The integration of that Congress with the Brazilian arts community was extraordinary, offering a rewarding and tantalizing taste of Latin American musical riches beyond my wildest dreams. So began several years of extensive travel through Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil, and Argentina, listening to and meeting with as many artists as I possibly could.

Today's program is a direct result of those travels. But of course, it's not as simple as just bringing a Latin American artist to Canada to do his/her thing and then go home! Soundstreams' challenge is to create a context that resonates for us here in Canada.

As in the ISPA model, our aim is to weave what is new and vital from other cultures into Canada's musical fabric. There is no better way to do this than to host on our stage the cream of the crop of Canadian performers and composers, in concert with their Latin American counterparts.

Almost every performer, and composer with a premiere on today's program, has been featured on a past Soundstreams program, but few have actually been featured together before. The Yiddish language has a wonderfully expressive term for the role Soundstreams plays. A *shiddoch* is a marriage matchmaker, the one who gazes into a crystal ball and must intuit what personalities will be irresistibly attracted to each other. We believe we've arranged a great marriage of musical and cultural personalities for you this afternoon, and we hope you agree!

Lawrence Cherney  
Artistic Director



NEW DIRECTIONS IN MUSIC

## ABOUT SOUNDSTREAMS

### Soundstreams An International Centre for New Directions in Music

Led by Artistic Director Lawrence Cherney and Executive Director Susan Worthington, Soundstreams is a Toronto-based music presenter that commissions, develops, and showcases the work of contemporary Canadian composers and their international counterparts.

These innovative collaborations are performed by the finest artists from Canada and around the world, and are presented in an annual concert series, our Salon 21 series at The Gardiner Museum, in national and international tours, and through a variety of education and outreach activities. To mark our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in 2012/13, Soundstreams launched SoundMakers, an innovative website and iPad app that invites music lovers to explore Soundstreams' commissioned works, create new works of their own, and share them with the online community.

Over the past three decades, Soundstreams commissions have added more than 150 works to the musical repertoire worldwide, reflecting a diverse variety of genres and cultural traditions. Soundstreams has also presented a number of festivals and conferences such as the Northern Encounters Festival, University Voices, Toronto Fanfare Project, and the Cool Drumming percussion festival and conference, as well award-winning operas including Thomson Highway and Melissa Hui's Cree opera *Pimootewin: The Journey*, R. Murray Schafer's site-specific opera *The Children's Crusade*, and Brian Current's *Airline Icarus*.

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Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducts the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra.

Photo courtesy of Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. Photographer: Hans van der Woerd

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# ENCUENTROS

Serouj Kradjian, piano  
María Mulata, voice  
Fabio Zanon, guitar  
Grisha Goryachev, guitar  
Héctor Del Curto, bandoneon  
Jeffrey Beecher, bass  
Sarah Thawer, percussion



Sunday, May 24, 2015, at 3:00 pm  
Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning  
273 Bloor St. West

## PROGRAM

The music in the concert is inspired by the musical traditions of Latin America, referencing a diversity of styles including afro-samba, bossa nova, tango, flamenco, and Colombian indigenous songs.

For more information on the pieces performed in this concert, visit [soundstreams.ca/encuentros](http://soundstreams.ca/encuentros)

Two new works have been commissioned for this concert, by Canadian composers:

## NEW WORKS

Andrew Staniland  
(b. 1977, Canada)

*Choro: The Joyful Lament for Villa-Lobos\** (2015)  
World premiere

Mark Duggan  
(b. 1961, Canada)

*Choro Sem Lua\*\** (2015)  
World premiere

There will be one 20 minute intermission.

\* *Choro: The Joyful Lament for Villa-Lobos* was commissioned by Stanley and Rosalind Witkin, in honour of Mr. Martin Offman.

\*\* *Choro Sem Lua* was commissioned by Soundstreams.



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## PROGRAM NOTE

By David Jaeger

Soundstreams welcomes back Serouj Kradjian, the versatile pianist and composer, with his newest collaboration in a series of genre-crossing adventures in the music of Latin cultures. In recent years Kradjian, at Soundstreams' initiative, has created imaginative programs of newly composed and re-arranged works that reference flamenco, tango, and Spanish contemporary classics. This time Soundstreams, together with the Royal Conservatory of Music's 21C Music Festival, has invited Kradjian and the ensemble to blend together works from an even wider pool, with fresh arrangements of both well and lesser-known pieces, in a range of styles, in an eclectic fusion of traditions from the "Old" world (Spanish flamenco and Portuguese fado) and the "New" world (Brazilian afro-samba, Argentinian tango and Colombian currulao or chapuca).

To enable this creative initiative, Soundstreams Artistic Director Lawrence Cherney has assembled a multi-national ensemble that includes Brazilian guitarist Fabio Zanon, Argentinian bandoneon player Héctor Del Curto, and Colombian singer María Mulata, together with Russian/American guitarist Grisha Goryachev, Toronto percussionist Sarah Thawer, and TSO principal bassist Jeffrey Beecher, all combined for a fresh encounter with the music of Latin America. This is the Toronto debut for Ms. Mulata, and also the first time that Goryachev and Zanon have performed together as a duo.

The centrepieces of the concert are two commissioned works by Canadians Andrew Staniland and Mark Duggan, both receiving world premieres this afternoon. Both of these new pieces make reference to the Brazilian popular music genre known as choro. Andrew Staniland's *Choro: The Joyful Lament for Villa-Lobos* is a duo conceived for the two virtuoso guitarists, Grisha Goryachev and Fabio Zanon. Andrew Staniland, himself a guitarist, says, "I set off to write a work inspired by the choro genre that channeled my deep affinity for the music of [composer] Heitor Villa-Lobos. Interestingly, the literal translation of choro is 'cry' or 'lament,'

seemingly contrary to the upbeat and cheerful musical character of the genre. It is characterized by virtuosity, improvisation, subtle modulations, syncopation, and counterpoint. As homage to Villa Lobos, I sampled a favourite riff from his *Choros #1*, transforming it into a new motif in a characteristic syncopated choro rhythm. While it is difficult to say if this work is a real choro, it certainly channels many choro characteristics. It is my humble, joyful homage to the great music of Villa Lobos." The work was commissioned for Soundstreams by Stanley and Rosalind Witkin, in honour of Mr. Martin Offman.

Mark Duggan's *Choro Sem Lua* (translation: *Choro Without Moon* or *I Cry Without the Moon*) is a larger composition for voice, piano, guitar duo, bandoneon, bass, and percussion. Duggan says that, "Musically, there are elements of Brazilian choro and samba, Cuban son, and a hint of flamenco." The work is based on poetry of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese poet, Fernando Pessoa, from his most famous collection, *Poesias de Fernando Pessoa*. Duggan says of Pessoa's poetry, "His work, for me, falls squarely into the existentialist category. I feel it's very much about getting an objective view (as much as is humanly possible) on our understanding of both our external and internal reality and experiences. It sometime comes across as negative or nihilistic to many readers, but ultimately, I feel it is a very realistic interpretation of human experience, almost zen-like in its objectivity." Duggan says that when Artistic Director Lawrence Cherney called him to request the work, "I was at my place in the country during a very cold night with many stars and no moon. It reminded me of Pessoa's poem which eventually became the text for the piece. I also added a stanza at the end from a different Pessoa poem from the same collection."

*David Jaeger is a composer, producer and broadcaster based in Toronto. He was the creator & Executive Producer of the long-running CBC Radio Two contemporary music series, Two New Hours.*

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## GUEST ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

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Mark Duggan,  
composer

Percussionist Mark Duggan is a versatile performer and composer active in multiple musical genres. He has performed with the Philip Glass Ensemble, Ensemble Intercontemporain de Paris with Pierre Boulez, Nexus, and is a regular performer with Toronto Symphony Orchestra, National Ballet of Canada Orchestra, Toronto New Music Concerts, and Esprit Orchestra. Duggan is a founding member of Canada's Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan. He has released five CDs of his own music, which have been twice nominated by both the Juno and East Coast Music Awards. Duggan has a Master of Fine Arts in world percussion from the California Institute of the Arts and a Doctor of Musical Arts in performance from the University of Toronto where he is a member of the percussion faculty.



Andrew Staniland,  
composer

Composer Andrew Staniland has firmly established himself as one of Canada's most important and innovative musical voices. Described by Alex Ross in *The New Yorker* as "alternately beautiful and terrifying," his music is regularly heard on CBC Radio 2 and has been performed and broadcast internationally in over 35 countries. He is the recipient of the 2009 National Grand Prize in EVOLUTION, presented by CBC Radio 2/ Espace Musique and The Banff Centre. Staniland has been Affiliate Composer to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (2006-09) and the National Arts Centre Orchestra (2002-04), and has also been in residence at the Centre du Creation Musicale Iannis Xenakis (Paris, 2005). He is currently on faculty at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland.



Serouj Kradjian,  
piano

Canadian pianist and composer Serouj Kradjian has established himself as a versatile artist whose readiness to break boundaries and explore different styles has made him an exciting voice on the international music scene. *The New York Times* described his playing as a "persuasive balance between elegance and spirit." Solo and chamber music recitals and premieres of his compositions have taken Kradjian from all major Canadian cities, throughout the United States, to European concert halls. In 2006, he won a Juno Award for his recording of songs by Pauline Viardot-Garcia, with Isabel Bayrakdarian. With the Amici Chamber Ensemble, of which he is co-artistic director, he recorded *Armenian Chamber Music and Levant*, for which he won the Juno Award for Best Classical Recording in 2013.

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## GUEST ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

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María Mulata,  
voice

María Mulata is an internationally recognized Colombian singer, researcher, and composer. She has been sought out for her memorable high-energy performances which incorporate an array of new sounds in her vastly folkloric repertoire. In 2007, at age 20, she won the Gaviota de Plata in the Viña del Mar Festival, and later graduated from Pontifical Xavierian University in Bogotá. Her performances have captivated audiences, taking them on a journey through the sounds of the Caribbean, Colombian Amazonas, and the Pacific. She has recorded four albums, and her latest work, *De cantos y vuelos* was nominated for a Latin Grammy for Best Folk Album in 2013. She has contributed to the soundtracks of films and has toured in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the United States.



Fabio Zanon,  
guitar

Fabio Zanon is one of the pre-eminent guitarists of today. As a solo and chamber player, author, conductor, teacher, and broadcaster, he has sought to expand the perception of the guitar in the concert scene. Born in Brazil, he started his musical studies at an early age, and completed his education at São Paulo University and the Royal Academy of Music in London. He has received many awards for his concerts and recordings, including the award for Best Concert Performance of 2006 in Brazil for his debut as an operatic conductor. Zanon has performed in some of the most prestigious halls of Europe, Asia, North and South America and released several recordings with critical acclaim.



Grisha Goryachev,  
guitar

A native of St. Petersburg, Russia, Grisha Goryachev is renowned for his extraordinary musical sensitivity and technical virtuosity in both classical and flamenco styles. Goryachev is one of very few guitarists in the world who is reviving the tradition of solo flamenco guitar in a concert setting that was practiced by legendary flamenco masters. Goryachev began playing guitar at the age of six, and began an extensive career as a child prodigy at nine years old. He received his Bachelor, Master and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, where he studied under famous guitar virtuoso Eliot Fisk. He was one of 30 people in 2006 to become a fellow of the prestigious Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship.

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## GUEST ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

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**Héctor Del Curto,**  
bandoneon

Praised by *The New York Times* as a "splendid player," Argentinean bandoneonist Héctor Del Curto's career has spanned more than 25 years, and has encompassed traditional tango, new tango, jazz, classical, and world music. Born into a family of bandoneon players, Del Curto was introduced to the world of tango and bandoneon by his grandfather, Héctor Cristobal. By the age of 17, he had won the title "Best Bandoneon Player Under 25" in Argentina, and was invited to join the orchestra of Osvaldo Pugliese. As conductor, he directed *Forever Tango* on Broadway, and founded the Eternal Tango Orchestra, a ten-piece ensemble. He recently produced and released his second album *Eternal Piazzolla*. Del Curto is the founding Artistic Director of Stowe Tango Music Festival.



**Jeffrey Beecher,**  
bass

Jeffrey Beecher pursues a varied musical career as both an energetic performer and educator. Currently principal bass player with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Beecher has performed with Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, and Orchestra of St. Luke's. An active chamber musician, Beecher has enjoyed performing at venues worldwide, and at numerous festivals. Beecher is a regular member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble. He currently serves on the faculties of the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music and University of Toronto. Beecher began his musical education in New York where he attended the Juilliard School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music, and completed his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music.



**Sarah Thawer,**  
percussion

Sarah Thawer is a drummer, percussionist, vocalist and pianist based in Toronto. She studied jazz and world music at York University, and was the recipient of the prestigious Oscar Peterson Scholarship. Thawer is a freelance musician, playing with various bands and artists. She is a self-taught drummer and percussionist, and primarily specializes in playing drum set, and Indian and Latin percussion, among other instruments. She also sings, composes, produces and plays piano. Thawer has experience playing a wide range of genres, and has studied the nuances of studio-grade recording, mixing and mastering. She has traveled throughout Canada, performing in Toronto, Ottawa, London, Niagara Falls, Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Calgary, and Saskatoon.



## ARTIST Q&A

### SARAH THAWER, PERCUSSION

Sarah Thawer is a drummer, percussionist, vocalist and pianist based in Toronto. She is a self-taught drummer and percussionist, and primarily specializes in playing drum sets, and both Indian and Latin percussion instruments, and works as a freelance musician, playing with various bands and artists. We caught up with Sarah over email to discuss her passion for percussion, the many instruments she plays, and her popular Youtube channel (SarahTDrumGuru).

**Soundstreams: How did you first become interested in percussion? What was the first instrument you learned how to play?**

**Sarah Thawer:** My father (who is a part-time musician and plays piano) used to babysit me and my sister for several hours every day. My father would play Indian music, and my sister and I would play drums and percussion on top of the music.

**SS: How many instruments can you play? Do you find it's easier to pick up new instruments now, based on your years of knowledge?**

**ST:** In my eyes, all drums and percussion instruments are categorized in one big, multicultural family. They are all linked yet so different. As a kid I never distinguished one genre from the next, and I never considered myself as a drummer/percussionist that plays only a certain kind of music. I just loved to play rhythms and I am very grateful [to have grown up] in a musical environment that consisted of Indian music (folk, semi-classical, classical and

Bollywood). I remember at one point my parents used to leave music playing while my sister and I would fall asleep every night as kids. Indian music consists of so many percussion instruments, and Bollywood music has a whole era of Latin-influenced music.

Each instrument comes with so much history and has a language of its own. However, I feel like it would be easier to pick up a new instrument since I have studied music theory and have dabbled with various instruments.

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## MY ULTIMATE GOAL AS A MUSICIAN IS TO UNDERSTAND MUSIC AT A DEEP LEVEL

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**SS: What is your ultimate goal as a musician?**

**ST:** My ultimate goal is to understand music at a deep level, and to be able to play in the moment. Music is very spiritual in many ways, and it forces us to be in the moment, to be mindful and sensitive, and it can even put us in a meditative state. My goal is to be able to reach those states, and to always have a desire to keep learning, growing, and making the world a better place by performing with musicians around the world.

To read more, visit [soundstreams.ca](http://soundstreams.ca)

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