



The Lost Karaoke Tapes

2019/20 CONCERT SERIES

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Canadian composer Nicole Lizée credits Soundstreams' founder and artistic director, Lawrence Cherney for her first introduction to the Australian Art Orchestra (AAO). This was in 2014, when Soundstreams commissioned Lizée to create music for a visit by the Melbourne based AAO to Toronto. Lizée told me, "My relationship with the AAO has proven to be one of the most rewarding thus far in my career. When we first worked together in 2014 we immediately connected; we shared a vision of what a modern music ensemble could be. We knew that we wanted to collaborate again as soon as possible and have worked together almost every year ever since. Each project has been broader in scope and more rewarding than the last. And now bringing together some of my absolute favourite players from Canada with those from the AAO in this project is very special."

AAO artistic director Peter Knight echoes Lizée's thoughts. "The moment we first met Nicky in Toronto in 2014 we all really liked her. In terms of her practice, I like the way she works in the spaces between things: genres, disciplines, instrumental approaches. This is very much aligned with the AAO and with my practice as a musician, which is also about the energy of the meeting points between things. It also helps that she really is one of the most brilliant composers currently practising."

Lizée's series of compositions, *Karappo Okesutura*, volumes 1, 2 and 3 all derive from her manipulation of the elements of karaoke. She says, "I was drawn to the obscured details that are revealed once the primary identifiers for a song (the lead melody and lyrics - often the first thing that the listener's ear gravitates towards in a pop context) are removed. Hand claps, bass lines, synth textures and particularly the backing vocals, take on a surreal urgency and prominence. Once the less obvious details and colours are exposed these are woven together to create a sonic landscape over which the karaoke singer performs the new version of the song. This skeletal rendition is a perfect

opportunity to contort a song without completely losing all identification or traces of the original.

"In 2005 I created my first volume of *Karappo Okesutura*. The pieces were written with this scenario in mind: a karaoke singer takes to the stage to perform an 80's chart-topper only to find that the karaoke machine is behaving erratically. It begins jumping to different sections of the track, rewinding and stopping without warning. The karaoke tape itself is damaged and warped - the pitch and speed are fluctuating, parts of the tape have been chewed by the machine. Yet the singer is still able to keep her composure; she follows and keeps up with the machine, changing tempo and pitch in tandem with the tape, and finishes the song like a professional.

"With in each subsequent volume I looked to further expand ways of 'damaging' the tapes and also expand the live performers' ways of interacting with them. While the malfunctioning karaoke tape and/or machine is the centre of the project it's the presence of the live ensemble that transforms it."

Volume 3, receiving its world premiere tonight, places the focus on Canadian and Australian pop music and culture. Lizée says, "The two countries seem to share similar qualities borne perhaps of their physical realities as large land masses within the Commonwealth. In the 80s, both countries produced pop music that was identifiably not 'American' and perhaps the resulting sounds came from the countries being on the 'outside looking in' to more dominant global cultures. At any rate, I was completely drawn to Australian music as much as Canadian pop."

Peter Knight adds, "It's an interesting way in to exploring the connections between our two cultures, which have so much in common along with some very clear differences."

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From the Artistic Director

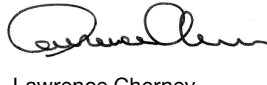
I first heard the music of Nicole Lizée nearly 20 years ago when Soundstreams produced a concert with Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal performing her *Left Brain, Right Brain*. The piece really irritated me! Not because I didn't connect with it - on the contrary - for days I simply couldn't get it out of my head.

Now I know why. Her work speaks to us of nostalgia - not the sentimental kind - the kind that comes from listening to what outdated analogue technologies have to tell us about the human condition. They're just like us: they're glitch-prone, they warp, they distort, and they're highly imperfect. But just like the Volkswagen Beetle, they're lovable. She's the perfect antidote for the digital age.

She also brings new and intriguing ways of hearing the very music we thought we knew, whether '80's pop or the classics. By deconstructing familiar music down to its essentials, much in the way that Bartok did with traditional Hungarian folk music, Nicole offers us the luxury of feeling like we're hearing it again for the first time when she reconstructs it.

During these 20 years we've commissioned her numerous times, including a project in 2014 that introduced her (and us!) to the legendary Australian Art Orchestra. Tonight, as then, you'll hear members of the AAO together with exceptional Canadian guest artists in another Lizée world premiere.

However, that 2014 concert came to an abrupt end two-thirds of the way through because of a massive power outage in Toronto. Tonight we'll make history (fingers crossed!) by featuring the Australian Art Orchestra and Canadian guests in the debut of their first full and completed evening concert in Canada!



Lawrence Cherney

Soundstreams wishes to acknowledge that this production is presented on the traditional land of the Wendat, Anishinabek, Haudenosaunee, and the Mississaugas of the Credit River First Nation. This land is the subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, and we encourage you to learn about your responsibilities to this treaty. Today, this meeting place is the home of many Indigenous people and Soundstreams is grateful to have the opportunity to collaborate and create alongside them.

Cover image: Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann

About Soundstreams

A world leader among contemporary music companies, Soundstreams is the foremost global presenter of new Canadian music. Lawrence Cherney, Artistic Director and Menon Dwarka, Executive Director are committed to showcasing the work of living Canadian and international composers with a focus on innovative thematic and experiential programming. Soundstreams also serves a broad community of music lovers through free outreach and education programs.

They include *Encounters*, a free discovery series featuring performances, discussions, and audience participation; *RBC Bridges*, helping talented contemporary composers worldwide launch their careers; *BMO SoundWave* provides accessible tickets to young adults; and *SoundMakers* provides interactive learning experiences online, in the classroom, and in the community.

Special Thanks

Karappo Okesutura Volume III was developed by the Australian Art Orchestra and Nicole Lizée in partnership with Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and Soundstreams, and with financial support from the Canada Council for the Arts, Australia Council for the Arts, Creative Victoria and the Ian Potter Foundation.



This concert is presented with the generous support of Steinway & Sons



The Lost Karaoke Tapes

Program

Karappo Okesutura Volume 3

60'

Composer

Nicole Lizée

Australian Art Orchestra

Peter Knight, *Artistic Director, Trumpet and Electronics*

Georgie Darvidis, *Voice*

Andrea Keller, *Piano*

Reuben Lewis, *Trumpet and Electronics*

Nicole Lizée, *Turntables*

Quinsin Nachoff, *Saxophone and Clarinet*

Samuel Pankhurst, *Bass*

Steve Raegele, *Guitar*

Ben Reimer, *Percussion*

Joe Talia, *Drums*

Leanne Zacharias, *Cello*

Production Team

Caroline Hollway, *Production Manager (Soundstreams) and Stage Manager*

Brandon Wells, *Sound Engineer, Production Manager (AAO), and Recording Engineer*

Artist Biographies

Nicole Lizée

Composer/Turntables

Called a “brilliant musical scientist” and lauded for “creating a stir with listeners for her breathless imagination and ability to capture Gen-X and beyond generation”, Nicole Lizée creates new music from an eclectic mix of influences including the earliest MTV videos, turntablism, rave culture, Hitchcock, Kubrick, 1960s psychedelia and 1960s modernism. She is fascinated by the glitches made by outmoded and well-worn technology and captures these glitches, notates them and integrates them into live performance.

Nicole was awarded the 2017 SOCAN Jan. V. Matejcek Award and received the Canada Council for the Arts Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music in 2013. She is a Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellow and received a 2016 Lucas Artists Fellowship Award. This Will Not Be Televised, her seminal piece for chamber ensemble and turntables, placed in the 2008 UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers’ Top 10 Works. She is a Korg Canada and Arturia artist.

Georgie Darvidis

Voice

Georgie Darvidis is one of Melbourne’s most versatile and adventurous young artists. Early musical study exploring theatre and classical vocal technique led to major roles with The Melbourne Theatre Company and The Victorian Opera Company. After completing a Bachelor of Music at The Victorian College of the Arts, she began to investigate more

traditional jazz styles as well as free improvisation and cross disciplinary compositional forms. This led to overseas study with acclaimed practitioners Shelley Hirsch and Theo Bleckmann in 2013. Georgie has performed in acclaimed Chamber Made productions Permission to Speak, Between 8 and 9and Diaspora. She has worked extensively with the Australian Art Orchestra, including tours to London, Poland and JazzFest Berlin, as well as featuring as a guest artist with the Rubiks Collective, the Australian Contemporary Music Ensemble and the Bennetts Lane Big Band. In 2017 Georgie was nominated for the Freedman Jazz Fellowship, recognizing her interdisciplinary vocal practice.

Andrea Keller

Piano

With a growing body of work traversing styles, Andrea Keller has been invited to compose and arrange music for Ensemble Offspring (2017), The Sydney Women’s Jazz Collective (2016), The Letter String Quartet (2016), The Song Company (2015), Marshall McGuire (harp)(2015), Zephyr (string) Quartet (2015 & 2014), Black Arm Band (2012-current), Genevieve Lacey & James Crabb Duo (2014), ‘Poetica’ ABC Radio National (2013), Genevieve Lacey (recorder) (2013), Four Winds Festival (2010), Claire Edwardes (percussionist) (2010), Melbourne Women’s International Jazz Festival (2010, 2003, 2000), Seraphim Trio (2009), Ten Part Invention (2009), Mike Nock (2002), Australian Art Orchestra (2002).

Lauded for her music, Keller has received three ARIA Awards, six Australian Jazz ‘Bell’ Awards, two Art Music Awards, an APRA Professional Development Award, the Merlyn Myer Composing Women’s Commission, and fellowships from the MCA/ Freedman Foundation and the Australia Council. Andrea is a Yamaha artist and a represented artist of the Australian Music Centre.

Peter Knight

AAO Artistic Director, Trumpet, and Electronics

Perpetually curious, Peter Knight’s practice defies categorisation. Peter’s work as both performer and composer is regularly featured in a range of ensemble settings, he also composes for theatre, creates sound installations, and is the Artistic Director of one of Australia’s leading contemporary music ensembles, the Australian Art Orchestra (AAO).

Peter’s role with the Australian Art Orchestra sees him touring regularly with the group both in Australia and abroad. He also commissions new work for the ensemble and curates a range of innovative programs for large and small settings. Outside of the AAO Peter performs regularly as a solo artist developing a distinctive modality for trumpet and electronics under the moniker, Allotrope. Other current projects include: Daughter’s Fever, featuring Melbourne alt folk luminary, Paddy Mann (AKA Grand Salvo); his celebrated cross-cultural sextet, Way Out West, with koto virtuoso

Satsuki Odamura, and his multi-award winning long-running collaboration with theatre-maker, Tamara Saulwick.

Reuben Lewis *Trumpet and Electronics*

Reuben Lewis's practice is both singular and eclectic. As an active performer, composer and bandleader, he has refined a unique electro-acoustic language, devised through trumpet with extended techniques and preparations alongside live analogue processing with pedals and amplifiers. The 2018 release of the debut album *Abstract Playgrounds* with his ensemble I Hold the Lion's Paw gained both national and international acclaim – including a glowing review in 'The Wire' magazine and a nomination for the Best Ensemble at the Australian Jazz Bell Awards. In 2017, he performed an 8-hour durational sleep concert with his co-led ensemble, The Phonetic Orchestra at the Serralves Festival in Portugal. Other notable collaborations include performances with the ensemble ACME, which premiered his multidisciplinary work *i know that i know* at the 2017 Melbourne Festival. Reuben has been appointed to the role of Associate Artist for 2019/2020, as part of the Australian Art Orchestra's Pathfinders – Music Leadership Program.

Quinsin Nachoff *Saxophone and Clarinet*

NYC-based saxophonist and composer Quinsin Nachoff has earned a reputation making "pure, bracing, thought-provoking music" that is "cliché-and convention-free" (Ottawa Citizen). His music moves fluidly between jazz and classical worlds and is soul-stirring yet intricately cerebral. His passions reach into both arts and sciences, with physics or astronomy concepts sparking inspiration for exhilarating compositions.

A state of constant unpredictability is vividly captured in Nachoff's group Flux, which features the talents of saxophonist David Binney, keyboardist Matt Mitchell, and drummers Kenny Wollesen and Nate Wood. Their JUNO-nominated second release, *Path of Totality*, thrives in the spaces between genres, styles and inspirations, and garnered a 4.5 star review in DownBeat: "Path of Totality is a stunning, deep dive of an album, the sort of music in which one could spend hours submersed."

Samuel Pankhurst *Bass*

Samuel Pankhurst is a bassist, multi-instrumentalist and producer. He is best known for his extensive work with the late Australian icon Allan Vincent Browne OAM, as well as trumpet iconoclast Scott Tinkler. As a long time member of the Australian Art Orchestra he has premiered new commissioned works by Alvin Lucier, Erik Griswold, Peter Knight,

and Nicole Lizée. Currently Sam is busy with his experimental studio pop project *Magic Person*, celebrated improv piano trio The Wild with Erik Griswold and Richard Daniell, post-hardcore improv trio Porscha featuring Stefano Roselli, and a telepathic Vibraphone/Bass duo with Vanessa Tomlinson. Pankhurst is the owner/engineer at DILLIGAF Studios (QLD) and tours UK/Europe/US extensively as a session bassist in various indie bands.

Steve Raegele *Guitar*

Montreal guitarist Steve Raegele plays composed music and improvised music. His style has emerged from a love of jazz, psychedelia, rock and roll, archaic pop music and art music. His recording *Last Century* was released in 2010 on influential Vancouver label Songlines Recordings to critical acclaim. In 2013 he performed Nicole Lizée's 2012: *Triple Concerto For Power Trio and Orchestra* as a featured soloist with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. He has performed with John Hollenbeck, Drew Gress, Bendik Hofseth, Christine and Ingrid Jensen, Miles Perkin, Erik Hove, Emma Frank, Nick Fraser, The Doxas Brothers, L'Orchestre National de Jazz de Montreal, Ensemble KORE, Architek Percussion, TorQ Percussion, Nicole Lizée's SaskPower, Warhol Dervish String Quartet, The Australian Art Orchestra and with indie rock legends The Dears as well as Dears frontman Murray A. Lightburn.

Artist Biographies

Ben Reimer *Percussion*

Ben Reimer has been called a “genre-bending wiz” (PuSh) establishing himself as a leading figure in contemporary drumset performance. He has spent the past fifteen years exploring a new role for drumset in the context of through-composed music. Ben has performed with the Winnipeg Symphony, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Manitoba Theatre Centre and Thunder Bay Symphony. He has been a guest soloist in the Bang On A Can Marathon, Brandon University “Pro Series”, the Winnipeg International New Music Festival, Edmonton New Music, Calgary New Music, University of Toronto New Music, GroundSwell, Cluster New Music + Integrated Arts Festival, The Little Chamber Music Series That Could, Music on Main, PuSh Festival, Innovations En Concert, live@CIRMMT and Roulette NYC concert series. Ben is a member of Architek Percussion and is a Sabian Cymbals, Yamaha Canada and Vic Firth artist.

Joe Talia *Drums*

Melbourne born and now based in Tokyo, Joe Talia is an improviser and composer who works with percussion, tape and electronics. Focussing on the use of Revox tape machine and analogue synthesizers in combination with instruments and field recordings, Talia’s electronic works patiently build up sparkling, detail-rich sound worlds of gliding tones, skittering percussion and

burbling location atmospherics. In live situations, Talia often uses tape and effects to process and warp his own and others’ playing into uncanny chains of echoes and spectral smears of sound. A virtuoso drummer, as a percussionist Talia emerges from the traditions of jazz and free improvisation and has developed a unique personal language of shifting accents, subtle virtuosity and discreet extended technique that he welds equally ably in jazz, rock, new music and improvisational contexts. Like his electronic works, his drumming often demonstrates a keen attention to long-form structures, dynamic development and group interactions.

Leanne Zacharias *Cello*

Leanne Zacharias is a dynamic cellist, educator and interdisciplinary artist known for innovative collaborations with artists of all stripes, across genres and geographies.

Her project *Music for Spaces* re-imagines concerts, public and natural space with sound, and recent work includes an immersive soundscape filling the Canadian Museum for Human Rights as part of the Winnipeg Symphony New Music Festival, *CityWide*: simultaneous recitals by 50 cellists presented by the International Cello Festival of Canada, and *Sonus Loc*: a sound installation on ice, selected by Winnipeg’s 2013 Warming Huts Art & Architecture competition. Recent appearances include the Pressure Waves New Music Workshop, Portal

Zero (conceived by architect Rick Derksen) at the WSO New Music Festival and the Agassiz Chamber Music Festival, where Leanne presented *Listening Booth*: twenty solo recitals for one audience member at a time.

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