



VANCOUVER
RECITAL
SOCIETY

Three vertical bars of varying heights and colors (orange, pink, purple) on the right side of the page.

2024^{YEARS}
2025
SEASON



FALL CONCERTS

Tamara Stefanovich piano

Sunday October 20 2024

From the Artistic Director

Dear Friends,

We've been determined to bring Tamara Stefanovich to Vancouver for some time - and by "some time" I mean *years!* She was originally scheduled to appear on our stage in November 2020, but unfortunately the



pandemic changed those plans. It took a while to find another mutually suitable date, but at long last here she is in her long-awaited Canadian debut!

Known for her captivating interpretations of a wide range of repertoire, Tamara performs in the world's major concert venues. She's equally at home in the music of Bach as she is in the music of composers of today and everything in between.

This afternoon's program of Messiaen interspersed with Bach and Rameau is both eclectic and exciting. I had the privilege of hearing Tamara perform live in Portland, Oregon (I went there expressly for her concert), and I can tell you that "breathtaking" is certainly an adjective that applies to her playing. She is truly a unique pianist.

Our presentation today is made possible by the generous support we receive from our Season Sponsor, the Peak Group of Companies, and our Concert Sponsor, The John C. Kerr Family Foundation. We would also like to thank the City of Vancouver for its support.

Enjoy the concert!



Leila Getz

The Artist

Tamara Stefanovich, piano

Sunday, October 20, at 3:00 pm
Vancouver Playhouse

Season Sponsor



Supporting the VRS since 2008

Concert sponsor:

John C. Kerr Family Foundation

Additional Support



Program

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)
Aria variata alla maniera italiana BWV 989
(approx. 16 minutes)

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)
Huit Préludes (1928-29)
Chant d'extase dans un paysage triste
(approx. 7 minutes)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)
Sinfonia No. 9 in F minor BWV 795
(approx. 4 minutes)

JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU (1683-1764)
L'entretien des Muses
(approx. 7 minutes)

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)
Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus
Regard des Anges
(approx. 5 minutes)

INTERMISSION

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)
Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus
Première Communion de la Vierge
(approx. 7 minutes)

JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU (1683-1764)
Les Cyclopes
(approx. 4 minutes)

JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU (1683-1764)
La Poule
(approx. 3 minutes)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)
Sinfonia No. 15 in B minor BWV 801
(approx. 2 minutes)

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)
Catalogue d'oiseaux
L'Alouette calandrelle
(approx. 6 minutes)

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)
Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus
La Parole toute-puissante
(approx. 3 minutes)

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)
Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus
Noël
(approx. 4 minutes)

OLIVIER MESSIAEN (1908-1992)
Cantéyodjayâ
(approx. 13 minutes)



CELLPHONES

The use of cellphones and recording devices is prohibited in the concert hall. Please take this opportunity to turn off all electronic devices.

音乐厅内禁止使用手机，禁止拍照，录音，录像。请观众关闭所有电子器材，感谢您的合作。

Tamara Stefanovich, piano

Early Life & Education: Born in Belgrade, Tamara studied at the University of Music in Belgrade and later at the prestigious Curtis Institute and at Kölner Musikhochschule. Tamara was co-founder and curator of “The Clearing” Festival presented by Portland International Piano, and was a Visiting Professor of Chamber Music at the Royal Academy of Music and Accademia di Musica di Pinerolo.

Performances: Recent engagements have included performances with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, MDR-Sinfonieorchester Leipzig, WDR Sinfoniesorchester Köln, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo.

Tamara also appeared at Beethovenfest Bonn performing Messiaen’s *Turangalila-Symphonie* with Beethoven Orchester Bonn, followed by concerts with Bremer Philharmoniker, Oregon Symphony and Das Neue Ensemble.

Recordings: Tamara’s award-winning discography includes a recording of Kurtág’s *...quasi una fantasia...* and his double concerto, performed with the Asko|Schönberg Ensemble, Reinbert de Leeuw and Jean-Guihen Queyras. Her recording of Bartók’s *Concerto for Two Pianos, Percussion and Orchestra* with Pierre-Laurent Aimard and the London Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Pierre Boulez was nominated for a Grammy Award.

Tamara’s first solo album, *Influences* (Pentatone), was dedicated to the works of Ives, Bartók, Messiaen and Bach. Last season, Tamara released two more recordings for Pentatone: Messiaen’s *Visions de l’Amen* with Pierre-Laurent Aimard, and a solo album, *Nicolaou Etudes & Frames*, featuring etudes by Vassos Nicolaou. She also released one recording for Winter & Winter, featuring Abrahamsen’s *Left, alone* with WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln.

Did you know: Breaking new ground, Tamara collaborates with Christopher Dell, Christian Lillinger and Jonas Westergaard for the innovative improvisation band SDLW. After its overwhelming premiere at Kölner Philharmonie, the quartet performed in Berlin, Hamburg, Munich and at Klangspuren Schwaz Festival. Their first album, entitled “SDLW,” was released on bastille musique in June 2022.



Photo credit: Marco Borggreve

Tamara Stefanovich is represented by HarrisonParrott GmbH, Munich, Germany

Program Notes

Johann Sebastian Bach Aria variata alla maniera italiana BWV 989

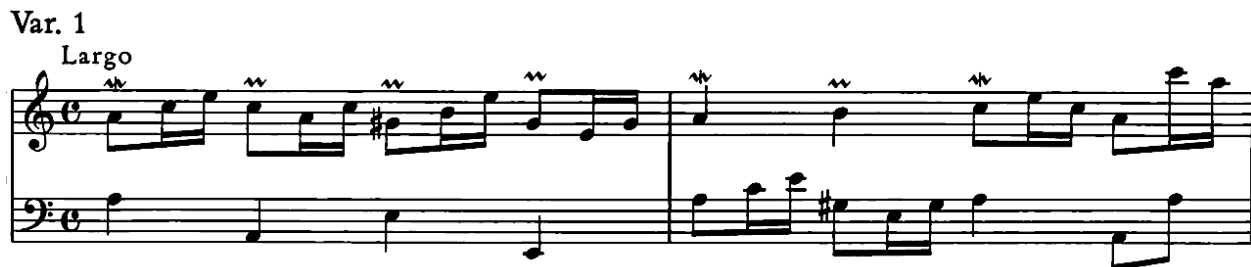
The *Aria variata alla maniera italiana* is one of the earliest of Bach's keyboard works and dates from around 1709 when he was employed as organist at the ducal court in Weimar. This was a period in which Bach was studying and copying out the works of Italian composers such as Vivaldi and Corelli, eager to learn and apply the stylistic traits that made their scores so lively and appealing.

The *aria* or "theme" of this set of variations is given in highly ornamented form in the so-called *Andreas Bach Buch*, a manuscript of 57 keyboard works from Northern Germany copied out by the composer's brother, Johann Christoph Bach (1671-1721).



Presented in a chorale-style four-voice setting, this theme lays out the expressive harmonies that will form the basis for the 10 variations that follow. Bach's use of the *harmonic* rather than the *melodic* structure of his theme to undergird each of his variations prefigures the same procedure that was to be used in his much later *Goldberg Variations* of 1741.

The initial variations are essentially two-part inventions that concentrate on a very small number of musical motives, shared between the hands, that fill in the harmonic scaffolding of the theme.



The variations become ever more animated, creating increased forward momentum as further subdivisions of the theme's original quarter notes occur. Triplets replace duplets, the pace of imitation between the hands increases and rhythmic displacement intervenes to rough up the surface texture.

This momentum slows, however, in the *Andante* of Variation 6,

Var. 6

Andante



Musical score for Variation 6, *Andante*. The score is in 6/8 time and consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a melodic line in G major, featuring a half note G4, quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, followed by a series of eighth notes. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes and eighth notes. The tempo is marked *Andante*.

after which the pace picks up again. A dance movement in 12/8 follows.

Var. 7

Un poco allegro



Musical score for Variation 7, *Un poco allegro*. The score is in 12/8 time and consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a melodic line in G major, featuring a half note G4, quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, followed by a series of eighth notes. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes and eighth notes. The tempo is marked *Un poco allegro*.

More acrobatic figuration appears in Variation 8.

Var. 8

Allegro



Musical score for Variation 8, *Allegro*. The score is in 6/8 time and consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a melodic line in G major, featuring a half note G4, quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, followed by a series of eighth notes. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes and eighth notes. The tempo is marked *Allegro*.

And finally, both hands erupt into continuous 16th-note motion in Variation 9.

Var. 9



Musical score for Variation 9. The score is in 6/8 time and consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. Both staves feature continuous 16th-note motion. The treble staff begins with a melodic line in G major, featuring a half note G4, quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, followed by a series of eighth notes. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes and eighth notes.

The concluding Variation 10 is not really a “variation” at all, but just the opening theme, returning in slightly modified form to end this work in the same manner and mood as characterized the chorale setting with which it began.

And in this unusual move we see yet another parallel with the *Goldberg Variations*.

Olivier Messiaen Chant d'extase dans un paysage triste from Huit Préludes (1928–29)

Olivier Messiaen was France's most influential twentieth-century composer. While he began his career in the 1920s much influenced by the harmonic innovations of Debussy and the propulsive rhythms of Stravinsky, he stands apart from even these revolutionaries in his approach to composition. Indeed, his music occupies a place outside the bounds of the Western tradition in art music itself.

His is music that *illustrates* but does not *narrate*. It is typically French in its desire to point the listener's attention to phenomena outside the music itself, indicated in descriptive titling or in scrupulously careful labelling within his scores. These phenomena include the sound of birds singing, an emotional landscape, the contemplation of the great symbols of the Catholic faith or the mystic states produced by Hindu rhythms. But his music has no narrative arc, no final end-point that it is aiming for, because the elements of tension and release that create forward motion and large-scale coherence in Western music are simply not there.

This is because he does not use the traditional scales that create and enable that tension, that release and that coherence. Instead, he invents his own scales, or *modes*, based on a predetermined patterning of intervals. And to each mode he gives a number.

His Mode 2 creates a scale from the pattern of a semitone followed by a whole tone, to create an octatonic (8-degree) scale comprised of the notes

B#-C#-D#-E-F#-G-A-A#-B#

The unusual sound of this scale pattern is heard at the beginning of the second of his *Huit Préludes* (1928–29), entitled *Chant d'extase dans un paysage triste* (Song of Ecstasy in a Sad Landscape).

The image shows the beginning of the piece, marked "Lent et triste". It consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. It starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a melodic line with a series of eighth notes, some with accents. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, starting with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic and playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

This opening ostinato of a sad and moping melodic character evokes the "sad landscape" of the work's title, made particularly acute in its grieving quality by the accented "sob" gestures in the second measure.

But the promise of a brighter mood is on the horizon as luscious streams of saturated chords in the manner of Debussy soon appear to relieve all this dreariness.

The "ecstasy" of the title is invoked by a subsequent passage replete with sugary sonorities and "ecstatic" trills.

The image shows a subsequent passage marked "Un peu plus vif". It consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps and a 3/8 time signature. It features a series of chords with eighth-note trills, marked with a pianissimo (*ppp*) dynamic. The middle staff is in treble clef with the same key signature and time signature, featuring a melodic line with trills and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, featuring a steady eighth-note accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *pp*.

These two sections, with their different moods, alternate almost impassively as the work proceeds, never really influencing each other but rather occupying their own psychological space within the piece.

Johann Sebastian Bach
Sinfonia No. 9 in F minor BWV 795
Sinfonia No. 15 in B minor BWV 801

Bach's Two-Part and Three-Part Inventions (the latter called *sinfonias* by Bach) were written as instructional materials to teach students how to play two- and three-voice polyphonic textures cleanly and musically. They first appeared in 1722 in the collection that Bach prepared for his then 11-year-old son Wilhelm Friedemann Bach (1710–1784).

* * *

The *Sinfonia No. 9 in F minor* is perhaps the most “abstract” of the three-part inventions, and arguably the greatest, according to Sir András Schiff. Written in fugal style, its opening measures present the three principal motives that will be interwoven throughout the piece.



There is (1) a fragmented fugal subject comprised of small “sighing” phrases, supported by (2) a bass line of slow chromatically descending steps in the style of a lament and enlivened by (3) a disruptive motive in much faster notes, which is actually just a decorated version of the fugal subject.

These three motives appear in all voices, demonstrating the unmatched contrapuntal skill of Bach in treating even the most chromatic of themes.

* * *

The *Sinfonia No. 15 in B minor*, with its whirlwind of florid passagework, addresses the digital dexterity of the student.



This passagework tests the performer's skill in playing rapid broken-chord figures in both hands while still maintaining a dance-like pulse in the triplet figures of the main theme.

Jean-Philippe Rameau L'entretien des Muses – Les Cyclopes – La Poule

Were one to seek a visual analogy for the effect of French harpsichord music on the ear, the idea of a delicate hand elegantly waving a lace handkerchief might inevitably spring to mind, such is the degree of ornamental “flutter” on the sonic surface of these pieces. And yet the harpsichord works of Rameau, while entirely in this style, come off as rich, deeply satisfying tapestries of sound rather than as frivolous baubles of Rococo entertainment.

Part of the reason is that his compositional method was very advanced for the time, both in the solidity of its harmonic foundation and in the various innovations he claimed to have introduced in writing for the keyboard. Many of the showy *batteries* (styles of keyboard attack) for which he so modestly takes credit in the introductions to his published collections involve hand-crossings or nimble tag-team exchanges between the hands.

This unusual combination of the graceful and the virtuosic, along with Rameau’s innate sense of theatricality, make his harpsichord music ideal for the modern concert hall.

Rameau published three collections of harpsichord pieces in 1706, 1724 and ca. 1727 respectively. Many of these works are *character* or *genre* pieces (a French specialty), each labelled with a colourful title identifying a person, object or activity meant to be described by the music so labelled. Such titling plays to the French national expectation that music will not just float freely in a world of its own, but rather will be descriptive of something real, anchored in some pre-existing impression already stored in the imagination.

* * *

L'entretien des Muses (Conversation of the Muses) is in binary form, with repeated first and second halves. It describes in its three-voice texture a serious discussion amongst the high gods responsible for inventing and promoting the various domains of the arts, such as poetry, tragedy and dance.



Occasional melody notes tied over the bar line give a halting conversational quality to this three-voice texture while a long trill in the first half of the piece points to the intensity of the divine discussion.

* * *

Les Cyclopes is a *rondeau* that describes the blacksmith’s workshop of the one-eyed giants – that eye being in the middle of their forehead – who create the weapons for the gods.



The opening volley of scale figures returns at various intervals, separated by numerous episodes that evoke the hammering sounds and ringing anvil blows that resound from their work.

Rameau's *batterie* of repeated notes is seen in measures 5-6 of the opening and is enlarged upon later in the piece with bold hand-crossings that send the left hand of the performer flying through the air in imitation of the vigorous, wide-ranging arm movements of these giant craftsmen of hot metal.



Meanwhile, deep in the bass register, a constant churn of 8th-note motion involving octave stretches in the left hand



creates a continuous hum of activity and considerable resonance from the lower regions of the keyboard to convey the impressive level of sound coming from the workshop.

* * *

La Poule attempts to forge a link between the disparate worlds of concert performance and animal husbandry. If the number of works inspired by farmyard animals is understandably low on most recital programs, the number directly descriptive of chickens, in particular, is even lower.

Rameau's *The Hen* struts and frets its four minutes upon the stage and then is heard no more. And yet by dint of insistent repetition and development of the simple opening motive, five repeated notes and an arpeggio, the composer manages to enlarge his caricature into a riveting portrait of considerable tragicomic grandeur.

But given the social context of this piece, more may be happening in it than merely an amusingly accurate portrayal of the ambulatory clucking behaviour of this common barnyard fowl.

The very *portrayal* of this animal on such an aristocratic instrument as the harpsichord, the plucking quills of which are, after all, made from bird feathers (and isn't *that* dark), makes the characterization live on two levels at once: the elegantly courtly and the rustically agricultural.

The question needs to be asked whether this proudly strutting but mindless creature is not really a hidden portrait of the many equally mindless French aristocrats that strut around the halls of Versailles in courtier's plumage engaging in endless rounds of polite but useless conversation such as this



only to pick up a few seeds of royal favour from the ground and peck out their rivals for the spoils.

And dare I even point out that the symbol of France, the symbol of the French king himself, is *le coq*, i.e., the rooster?

Olivier Messiaen

XIV. Regard des Anges - XI. Première Communion de la Vierge

XII. La Parole toute-puissante - XIII. Noël

from *Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus*

Messiaen's deep commitment to the Catholic faith surfaces explicitly in his music towards the end of the Second World War. His *Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus* (1944) is a collection of 20 piano pieces, each *regard* (contemplation) focused on a scene from the New Testament, present as a kind of *tableau vivant* in the composer's imagination as he writes.

This music is very complex, and often shockingly dissonant because of the non-traditional scale patterns that Messiaen uses for each piece. His scores are filled with symbolic musical motives and rife with arcane compositional devices such as canons and "unretrogradable rhythms" (i.e., palindromes).

The music is highly thought-out and meticulously notated with explanatory labelling by the composer. But nonetheless, it is not music that is easily accessible at a first hearing.

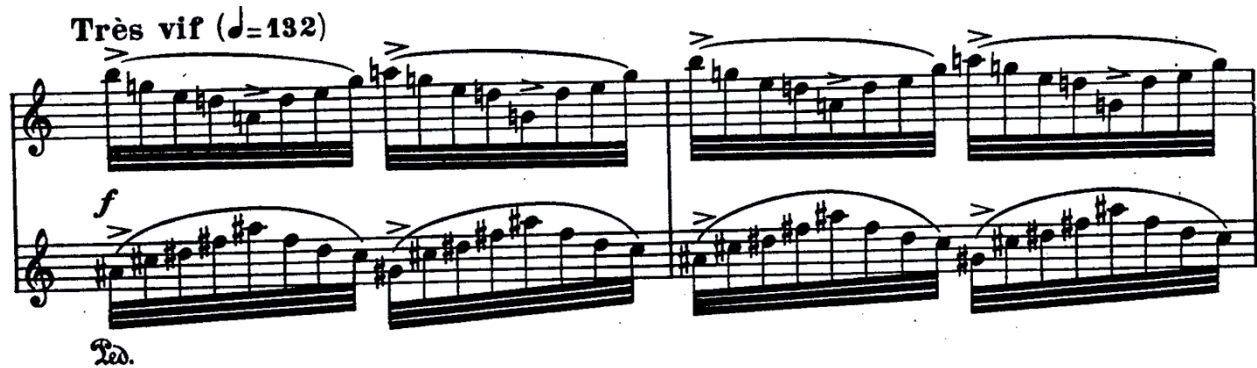
* * *

Regard des Anges lets us see through the eyes of God's angels.

Messiaen tells us what kind of scene this is in a textual commentary at the head of the score:

Scintillations, percussive sounds, the powerful blowing of trombones; your servants are fiery flames ... then the songs of birds that fall from the sky — and the stupor of the angels increases, for it is not to them but to the human race that God has united himself.

Messiaen adored Chopin and this piece opens with the beating of angels wings in a texture reminiscent of the contrary-motion patterning between the hands of Chopin's harp-like 'Aeolian' étude, Op. 25, No. 1 in A flat.

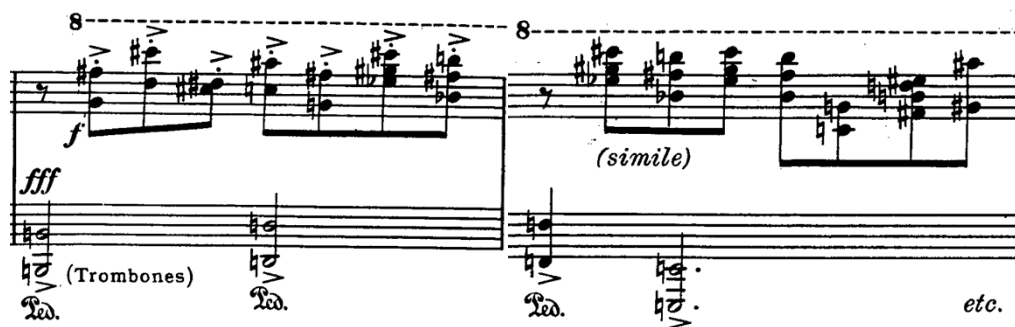


It is worth remembering that Messiaen is not working *narratively* in these pieces. He presents independent "panels" of music illustrating his subject matter in the same manner as that used in multi-part altarpieces: the panels all present aspects of the same theme but are not meant to interact with each other.

A rhythmic canon in tritones soon breaks out, perhaps suggesting the beating of drums.



Then trombones blare majestically:



Musical score for trombones. The top staff is marked *fff* and *(simile)*. The bottom staff is marked *ff*. The score includes the instruction *(Trombones)* and *etc.* The music features a series of chords and melodic lines, with a dynamic marking of *fff* and a tempo marking of *(simile)*.

After a while the sound of twittering birds is heard:



Musical score for birdsong. The top staff is marked *f* and *Même mouvement (comme un oiseau)*. The bottom staff is marked *mf*. The score includes the instruction *(comme un oiseau)* and a tempo marking of *Même mouvement*. The music features a series of melodic lines, with a dynamic marking of *f* and a tempo marking of *Même mouvement (comme un oiseau)*.

This birdsong passage is astonishingly evocative and prefigures Messiaen's later obsession with capturing and notating the sounds of birds in nature.

The final section, which leads to the final measure, is a great crescendo of excitement, expressing the stupor of the angels when they realize that God will unite with the human race in His plan for the salvation of all.



Musical score for the final section. The top staff is marked *pp* and *cresc.*. The bottom staff is marked *(non legato)* and *(La stupeur des anges s'agrandit)*. The score includes the instruction *(non legato)* and a tempo marking of *Bien modéré*. The music features a series of melodic lines, with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a tempo marking of *Bien modéré*.

In this way Messiaen's commentary — at the head of the score of each piece and in his labelling of individual sections — allows us to hear this music as a kind of “soundtrack” to a religiously-inspired “art film” playing in his head.

The musical “plot lines” for the remaining works from the *Vingt regards* are as follows:

Première Communion de la Vierge

*After the Annunciation, Mary looks with adoration upon Jesus within her ...
my God, my son, my Magnificat! my love without the sound of words ...*

tendre
pp
p
(intérieur)
(Thème de Dieu)
11

The voice of God resides in the left-hand chords in a hopeful configuration that ends on a major chord, indicating God's love, while the Virgin Mary receives the news with tender astonishment in the treble.

Later the beating heart of the baby Jesus is felt within her, pulsing in the bass.

trépide
ff
f
(Battements du cœur de l'Enfant)
11

La Parole toute-puissante (The all-powerful Word)

This child is the Logos that sustains all things with the power of his word ...

Un peu vif (♩=126)
sf
ff
sf
ff
16^a bassa
(Tam-tam; pédale rythmique sur un rythme non rétrogradable)
11

Noël

The Christmas bells ring out with us the sweet names of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Très vif, joyeux (♩ = 168)

ff
(comme des cloches)
ff
8^a bassa
8^a bassa

The opening of this piece imitates the cacophonous clanging of bells in celebration of the birth of the Christ child.

Olivier Messiaen L'Alouette calandrelle from Catalogue d'oiseaux

Starting in the early 1950s, Messiaen began to deepen his fascination with the sounds of birds, which he viewed as creatures that roam free in nature as joyous manifestations of God's love.

And so, starting in 1956, he began roaming across the width and breadth of the French provinces to transcribe the sounds of each geographical region's native bird species. These transcriptions, totalling 77 distinct species in all, he used to compose 13 pieces of solo piano music which were published in 1958 under the title *Catalogue d'oiseaux* (Bird Catalogue).

Like his *Vingt regards*, each of the collection's 13 pieces is richly annotated, indicating in turn the name of each bird he is hearing. Although one single bird lends its name to each movement, Messiaen includes the full range of bird sounds he heard on a specific afternoon of bird-watching — or rather, *bird-listening*.

And like a good "birder" diarist, he notes the important details of each outing: where he was, the time of day, the weather, etc.

* * *

In the fifth movement of his collection Messiaen indicates above the score of his movement entitled **L'Alouette calandrelle** that he was in Provence, in arid rocky terrain, surrounded by broom and cypress, with "fierce light and heat."

On such an afternoon a number of bird calls come to his ear, beginning with the song of the lark — the "greater short-toed lark", to be precise:

(Chaleur et solitude du désert de la Crau)
Alouette Calandrelle
Lent (♩ = 54) Un peu vif (♩ = 108) Lent (♩ = 54)

pp
pp
mf (clair)
pp

As the birds that Messiaen is hearing have not been schooled in the equal temperament system of 12 equally-spaced semitones used in modern Western music, he gets over this misalignment of pitch classes by having his birds “sing” on the piano in two-note tone clusters, to quite telling effect.

But larks aren’t the only creatures auditioning to achieve everlasting fame in his piano works.

A chorus of cicadas croaks out their rough refrain as well.

(chœur des cigales)
Presque vif (♩ = 138)

The score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It features a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, marked with a 'long' breath mark. The lower staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat), featuring a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Dynamics include *mf* (sec et monotone), *f*, *pp*, and *ff*. There are trills (tr) and a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking. A first ending bracket is present in the upper staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

And the predatory *faucon crécerelle*, a type of falcon, is ever on the watch for prey:

Faucon Crécerelle
vif (♩ = 152)

The score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat), featuring a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, marked with a 'long' breath mark. The lower staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat), featuring a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Dynamics include *f*. There are trills (tr) and a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Not to mention the dull, metallic call of the *caille* (quail):

Caille
Très modéré (♩ = 120)
(bien rythmé, claquement doux et mouillé)

The score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat), featuring a melodic line with eighth notes and rests, marked with a 'long' breath mark. The lower staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat), featuring a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Dynamics include *mf*. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

In these vivid aural memories, transcribed and recorded on score paper, we get to share in the composer’s boundless love of Nature and its aviary inhabitants.

Olivier Messiaen Cantéyodjayâ

In the period immediately following World War II, Messiaen began to study in depth the 12-tone “serial” composition methods of Schoenberg, Webern and Berg, the so-called “Second Viennese School”. This school of composition was eager to replace the old way of making music with melodies in major or minor keys and diatonic scale-based harmonies with a new approach that would apply rigorous patterning to the musical parameters of pitch, rhythm and duration in pre-determined “series” (hence the term “serial”).

Interesting as Messiaen found these ideas in themselves, they seemed to him merely an extension of late-nineteenth-century German Romanticism. He thought of serial composition as a way of refracting the musical ideals of that period through a mathematical prism only to arrive, in the end, at the same kind of musical expressiveness found in the works of Wagner, Richard Strauss and Mahler.

And Messiaen was no German Romantic. For him music had a religious quasi-liturgical purpose, so he looked for inspiration to the ancient musical practices of South India where myriad varieties of Hindu rhythmic patterns had formed the basis for the region’s musical culture for centuries.

The result was *Cantéyodjayâ* (1949) a work consisting of 27 brief “panels” or episodes of music, each structured in a special way. And as had become his practice, the work is elaborately labelled with the names of the Hindu rhythms and practices employed in the separate sections.

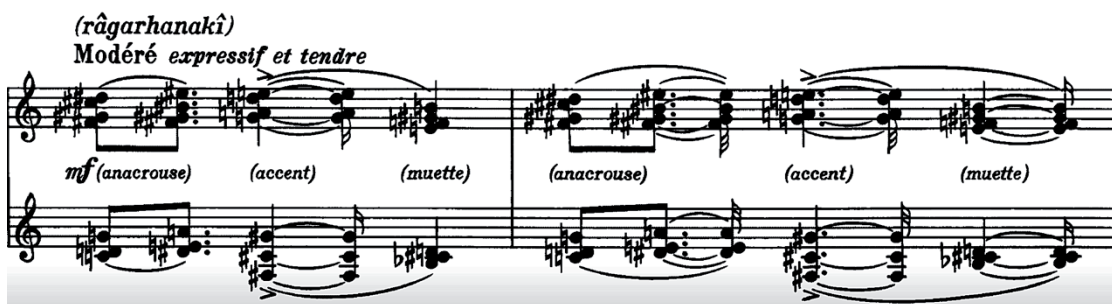
* * *

The opening section functions as a “refrain” that by its frequent recurrences gives the work as a whole a kind of rondo-ish structure. Note the “serialized” dynamics of this section.

(Cantéyodjayâ)
Très vif

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the opening section of *Cantéyodjayâ*. The first system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and a finger number '1'. It features a series of chords and intervals, with dynamic markings *f* (forte) and *p* appearing. The bass staff starts with a dynamic marking of *p* and contains a melodic line with various intervals and dynamics including *f*. The second system, starting at measure 15, also has two staves. The treble staff shows a sequence of chords with dynamic markings *pp* (pianissimo), *p*, and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The bass staff continues the melodic line with dynamic markings *p*, *f*, and *ff* (fortissimo). The notation includes various accidentals, slurs, and dynamic hairpins throughout.

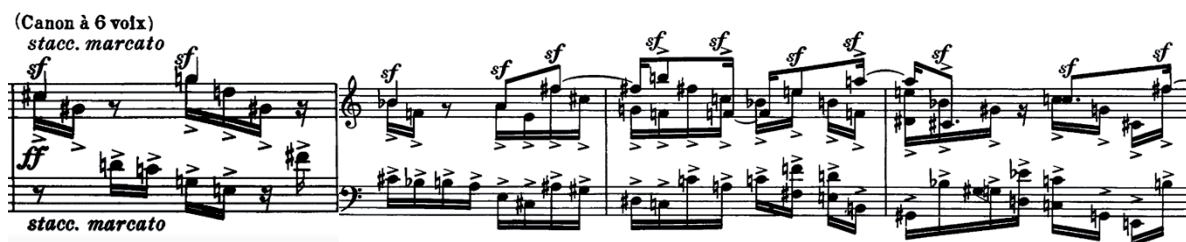
The intervening episodes range widely in their structure and emotional quality. Some are tender and affectionate:



Others are complex mathematical puzzles in which dynamics, pitch and duration values are rigorously organized in repeating series.



And there is even a passage in canon:



The overall effect is one of dazzling, almost overwhelming complexity but a complexity subsumed within a ritual purpose.

Messiaen, even at his most obscure, remains a joyous celebrant at a musically conceived Mass of his own creation.

Program notes by
 Donald G. Gislason, 2024

Thank You!

**The Vancouver Recital Society gratefully acknowledges
the following individual, foundation and corporate partners for their support.**

Season Sponsor: The Peak Group of Companies

Concert Sponsors: Elaine Adair | Elizabeth Arnold-Bailey & Robert Bailey | Arlene Gladstone & Hamish Cameron | Colleen & Nick Filler | Stephen M. Fitterman | Birgit Westergaard & Norman Gladstone | Ann Harding | The Martha Lou Henley Charitable Foundation | Cathy & Ian | Lynn Kagan | Judi Korbin | John C. Kerr Family Foundation | Risa & Bill Levine | London Drugs | George Pick & Santi Pelaez | Quesnel Foundation | Dr. Barbara Romanowski | Joanne & Stanis Smith | Rick Carswell & Maxine Spearle | Ric & Lynda Spratley | Forster/Stephenson Legacy Fund | Joyce & Tony | Laurie & Tony | The Board of Directors of the Vancouver Recital Society | Alexandra Volkoff

Additional Support: RBC Emerging Artists | The Estate of Edwina & Paul Heller | The Province of British Columbia - Festivals, Fairs & Events Fund | The City of Vancouver - Cultural Services | The Alan & Gwendoline Pyatt Foundation | The Diamond Foundation | The Deux Mille Foundation | The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

Accommodation Partner: The Opus Vancouver

Media Partners: Stir | The Vancouver Sun

Community Partners: Vancouver Academy of Music | Vancouver Public Library | Kettle Friendship Society

Supporters

Guardians (\$10,000 and above):

Elaine Adair | Lois Binder | The Christopher Foundation | Hilde & Peter Colenbrander | Judith Fisher & Keith Purchase | Ann Harding | Ms. Allison Hart | Louise Fletcher Memorial Fund | Ms. Jane Macdonald | The Martha Lou Henley Charitable Foundation | Joan C. McCarter Foundation Through the Victoria Foundation | Sheila Mcleod | Otto & Marie Pick Charitable Foundation | The Alan & Gwendoline Pyatt Foundation | Dr. Barbara Romanowski | Ian & Jane Strang | Tony Yue

Visionaries (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Mr. & Mrs. Ian & Catherine Aikenhead | Mark Allison & Stephanie Holmquist | Peter Cass | Casey Ching | Elizabeth Arnold-Bailey & Robert Bailey | The Diamond Foundation | Russell Wodell & David Gordon Duke | Colleen & Nick Filler | John C. Kerr Family Foundation | Sarah Kennedy in Memory of Ellen Tallman, Robin Blaser and David Farwell | Kate Ker & Paul Cobban | Cheryl Killam | Bill & Risa Levine | Cedarhurst Foundation | Don & Jane Shumka | Ric & Lynda Spratley | Forster/Stephenson Legacy Fund, Held At Vancouver Foundation | John & Judy Taylor | The Estate of Dr. Mervyn L. Weir | V. Wong

Champions (\$2,500 - \$4999)

Mark De Silva | Deux Mille Foundation | Valerie & Richard Dunsterville | Daniel & Brenda Getz | Gordon James Harding | Karen & Stephen Kline | David & Judi Korbin | Alistair Mackay | David McMurtry | Mary Newbury | Katherine Paton | Stephen Schachter | The R. & J. Stern Family Foundation | Holly Sykes & Rob Baker | Ken & Patricia Tolmie | One Anonymous Champion

Devotees (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Timothy Agg & Stuart Alcock | Joanie Anderson | Dawn Binnington & Peter Jackson | Leila Chorley | Myron Story & Larry Clausen | Christine Cook | Jeff Dresselhuus | William Ehrcke & Donna Welstein | Keith Farquhar & Koji Ito | Judy Finch | Stephen M. Fitterman | Kim M. Floeck | Robert Goldstein and Christine Kerr | Joan Harding | David Harvey & Cecilia Bernabe | John Hooge | Rebecca & John Hunter | Ms. Valerie Hunter | Ingunn Kemble | Gord Konantz in Memory of Gail Konantz | Anndraya Luui | Bill Meyerhoff in Memory of Nina Popovska | Christine Mills | Mary Jane Mitchell | Geoffrey Newman | Patricia Pender | Erica Pratt | Cecil Sigal | Joanne & Stanis Smith | Gloria Tom | Morag Whitfield | Susan Wong Lim | One Anonymous Devotee

Aficionados (\$500 - \$999)

David Agler | Jeff & Keiko Alexander | Sabina Dobrer | Bill & Gladys Baxter | Gillian Beattie | Brenda Benham | Joost Blom | Johan Arne Borgen | Victoria Bushnell | Richard Carswell | G. Chetty | Kai Yee Chow | James L. & Patricia

J. Davidson | Jared Dawson | Larry Dian | Michael & Dana Freeman | Leila Getz | Sara Getz & Jim Forrest | Maria Giardini | Jonathan Girard | Rose Marie Glassman | Lyman & Penelope Gurney | Michael & Sandy Hayden | Shiuman Ho | Heather Holmes | Judy Killam | Chin Yen Lee | E.J. Makortoff | W & S Mennell | Kathryn Neilson | Gregory & Alla Polyakov | William D. Robertson | Marie Schneider & Richard Dettman | Karen Shuster | Niamh Small | Federico Salazar & Jim Smith | Mitch & Anne Taylor | Carol Tsuyuki | Muriel Vallance | Alex Volkoff | Robin Wenham | Jan Whitford & Michael Stevenson | Cheryl Williams | Janice Williams | Christine & Jonathan Wisenthal | Baldwin Wong | Jennifer & Kenneth Yule | Six Anonymous Aficionados

Friends (\$250 - \$499)

Deborah Armour | Geri Barnes | Paul Beckmann | Hazel Birchall | Norma Boutillier | Ms. Anne Clemens | Judith Coffin | Melodie Corbett | Basil & Tish Davis | Lawrence A. Diamond | Mr & Mrs JS Donn | Evelyn Downs | Allan Fletcher | Roger & Marjorie Foxall | Daphne and Anson Frost | Maryke Gilmore | Carolyn & Peter Godfrey | Sima N. Godfrey | David Griffiths | Marion Keith | Cindy King | Pamela & David Kirkpatrick | Leora Kuttner & Tom O'Shea | Fakroon T. Lakdawalla | Renate Lauritzen | Joyce Lee & Vincent Wong | D. Wendy Lee | Kathie Marteinsson | Barbara O'Brien | James & Susan Olsen | Tianze Peng | Rhona Rosen | Donald J. Rosenbloom | Martha Russell | Melville & Joan Shaw | Esther E. Vitalis | Duncan Watts-Grant | Chris Williams in Memory of Leon Getz | Eight Anonymous Friends

Enthusiasts (up to \$249)

Bryan & Sheila Andrews | Barbbra Arnold | Barry Auger | Jill Bain | Alan & Elizabeth Bell | Barbara Bowes | Carol Brauner | Martha Brickman | Donna Cairns | Elaine Campbell | Miriam Caplan | Ingrid Catz | Wilma Chang | Lesley & John Christie | Dr. Elisa Clegg | Burke & Hanneke Corbet | Irina Cosova | Ruth Crellin | Gorm Damborg | Sally Day | Anne Dobbie | Moyra Dobson | Peter Dodek and Hella Lee | Allison Downs | Margot Ehling | Christiana Flessner | Roger & Marjorie Foxall in Memory of Dr. Robert Boyd | Cori Friedman | Patsy George | The McGrane - Pearson Endowment Fund, Held At Vancouver Foundation | Cathy Grant | Glen Hansman | Evelyn Harden | Mr. & Mrs. Eldon Glenn Hawkins | Peter Michael Herford | Stanley Herschberg | Donna Hogge | Jack Huberman | Nick & Celia Hudson | Alexandre Igoumnov | Susan Ng Jakobsen | Helene Kaplan | K & J Keenan | Loretta Gail Keller | Dianne Kennedy | Elena Konstantinova | Norman Krasne | Patricia Laimon | Malcolm Lake | Beryl Lamb | Les Leader | Ken Lee | Richard J. Lee | Melissa Leong | Barbara Lewison | Emma Li | Janet Lowcock | Huiyuan Ma | Alison MacLennan | Janice Masur | Anne Mauch | Mr. & Mrs. John McKellar | Elena F. Miller | Gabriella Minnes-Brandes & Yoram Minnes | Jane M. Mitchell | Emi Nakazawa | Philip Neame in Memory of Eva Lister | Lynne Northfield | Henriette Orth | Ross Paul & Jane Brindley | Jill Plumbly | Ernest W. Quan | Mark L. Quigley | Neil Ritchie | Lon & Marilyn Rosen | Sabine Rouques | Richard Schick | Angela Schiwy | Inna Sekirov | Philip Sestak | Dorothy Shermer | Nadine Sherwin & David Nicholson | Christine L. Shiner | Alistair & Linda Taylor | Paris Simons | Victoria Smus | Ingrid Söochting | Aldrich Tan | Anona E. Thorne | David Van Blarcom | José Verstappen | Marisa Danielle Vitiello | Barbara M. Walker | Orrin & Wendy Webber | Cora Whiting | John & Hilde Wiebe | Eva Wilson | Alice Wong | Jason Wroblewski | Donald Yung | James Paul Zablosky | Barbara Zielinski | Eleven Anonymous Enthusiasts

**The following donors have also generously supported
the VRS's Building Blocks Endowment Fund at the Vancouver Foundation:**

The late Kurt Gagel | Leon & Leila Getz in Honour of the late Edwina Heller | Maryke & the late Paul Gilmore | Kenneth Owen Gracie & P.H. Waddell | The late Elisabeth de Halmy in Memory of Alexander de Halmy | Ann Harding | The late Edwina & Paul Heller | Martha Lou Henley in Honour of Leila Getz | Lynn Kagan | The late Harry Locke | Lilli & Jerry Luking | The late Miss Denise Mara | Eileen Mate | Diana McMeekin | Paula Palyga | Abe & the late Leyla Sacks | Ian & Jane Strang | John & Judy Taylor | Marilyn & the late Brian Wallace | Susan Wong Lim in Memory of Jean Lyons | Elizabeth Fong Yung in Loving Memory of T.Y. & Grace Fong | One Anonymous Building Block

Corporate supporters of the VRS's Building Blocks Endowment Fund at the Vancouver Foundation include:

AXA Pacific Insurance Co. | Getz Prince Wells | Haywood Securities

**Presenting exceptional artists is made possible by the generosity
of all our supporters, who make the journey with us throughout the season.**

This list was created on Tuesday October 15, 2024, and includes bequests, gifts of cash, donations of securities, sponsorships and ticket donations dating back to August 15, 2023. Should you discover any errors or omissions, please accept our sincere apologies and contact Sara Getz, General Manager, by email to sara@vanrecital.com or by phone at 604.602.0363, so that any necessary corrections can be made.

There are many ways to support the VRS including making a philanthropic gift, sponsoring a concert and/or including us in your estate plans. If you would like more information, please contact us at 604.602.0363.

103 - 119 West Pender Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1S5

Telephone: 604.602.0363

Email: info@vanrecital.com

Web: vanrecital.com



VRS Board of Directors

Casey Ching - President

Valerie Hunter - Vice-President

Jared Dawson - Treasurer

Jeff Dresselhuis - Secretary

Jonathan Girard

Shiuman Ho

James (Jim) Smith

Gloria Tom

Denis Walz

Staff

Leila Getz, C.M., O.B.C., DFA

Founder & Artistic Director

Sara Getz

General Manager

Alex Glyniany

Box Office & Production Manager

Niamh Small

Marketing & Communications Manager



Supporting the VRS since 2008

**The Peak Group of Companies is proud to
support the Vancouver Recital Society
as the 2024-2025 Season Sponsor**