

1CONTINUUM® - 45th Season

Cheryl Seltzer & Joel Sachs, Directors

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CONTINUUM IS 45!

Celebrating with five premieres and a classic

CONTINUUM, directed by Cheryl Seltzer and Joel Sachs, completes its landmark 45th New York Series with a special concert Sunday, May 1, 7 PM, at Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center, 129 West 67th Street. This celebration concert will feature recent major works composed for Continuum: World Premieres by Ursula Mamlok and Wang Jie, and New York Premieres by Carman Moore, Ileana Perez Velázquez, and Roberto Sierra. A work by Elliott Schwartz will honor his 75th birthday year.

Continuum is honored to premiere works from this distinguished group of American composers, representing a variety of styles and cultural backgrounds. Of the two works receiving World Premieres URSULA MAMLOK has written her first major work for piano 4-hands, *Mosaics* (2011), for co-directors Cheryl Seltzer and Joel Sachs, at an energetic age 88. Mamlok, who spent most of her career in New York, recently returned to her native Berlin, in part because of rapidly increasing performance of her music in Europe. Her music unifies classical serial procedures and spontaneous, vivid emotional characterization. Also in its World Premiere is WANG JIE's *A Longing for Spring*, A Multi-language Song Cycle (2011) for soprano, clarinet, violin, and piano. Language and music form a close bond in this work, on a well-known poem expressing the personal impact of war by the great 8th-century Chinese poet Tu Fu. Born in China in 1980 and in New York since 2000, Wang Jie sets three forms of the poem: the original Chinese, a word-for-word literal English translation, and last, a poetic English interpretation. Heightening awareness of the language Wang Jie will project the Chinese characters and English forms as super-titles.

Receiving their New York Premieres are two other works for voice and ensemble: *Idolos del sueño* (Dream eidolons - 2010) for soprano, clarinet, violin, cello, piano by ILEANA PEREZ VELÁZQUEZ (b. 1964, Cuba) and *SHE (An Appreciation)* (2010) for soprano, clarinet, violin, piano by CARMAN MOORE (b. 1936). Perez Velázquez, recognized as one of Cuba's most promising young composers, moved to the U.S. in 1993 and teaches at Williams College. This ecstatic work sets texts of the eminent Cuban-American poet Carlos Pintado. She was inspired by these poems: "they contain profound metaphors on life, time, love, and poetic reflections on our brief but also highly emotional and pervasive existence." Moore, an internationally active composer and multi-talented musical figure well-known in New York, creates the stages of a woman's life cycle with his own texts intermingled with quotations from Lord Byron, Lucretius, Sun Bu-Er, and Basho. Continuum gave the World Premiere at San Paulo, Brazil's Festival Música Nova last Fall.

Continuum has performed and recorded many compositions of the brilliant Puerto Rico-born ROBERTO SIERRA. Born in 1953 and educated in Puerto Rico, Sierra undertook further composition studies in Europe, and for three years was a pupil of György Ligeti. After prominent positions in both Puerto Rico and the U.S., he is now professor of composition at Cornell University. The music of Sierra's Afro-Cuban heritage underlies many of his compositions, the Caribbean popular music treated with utmost sophistication, vitality, and color. The *Sonata para violin y piano* (2010) seems to bow to tradition in the soaring songful melodies, accompanying figurations, and formal structure, but the abundant spice of complex contrapuntal and rhythmic transformations give it a completely new sensibility. The concert will also include a work in honor of an old friend of Continuum, ELLIOTT SCHWARTZ, in his 75th year. Retired now from Bowdoin College and with long service as leader of several composers' organizations, Schwartz continues his internationally-active career. His 1998 *Vienna Dreams* for viola, clarinet, and piano is a nostalgic homage to a glorious past age, evoking fragments of familiar Viennese chamber music

by Mozart, Schubert, and Brahms, as filtered through Mahler - a virtual musical seance.

Artists are Mary Mackenzie, soprano; Moran Katz, clarinet; Renée Jolles, violin; Stephanie Griffin, viola; Christopher Gross, cello; Cheryl Seltzer and Joel Sachs, piano.

Continuum's signature Retrospective Series has been a hallmark of New York's musical life since the organization's founding in 1966. Its innovative programming has been especially valued for introducing New York to unknown extraordinary composers from around the world, many of whom later have achieved worldwide standing. Continuum, in turn, has had remarkable opportunities to bring American and other new music to festivals in far corners of the world, in the ensemble's travels to such locations as Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, Indonesia, China, and Korea. Continuum has recorded on Nonesuch, Musical Heritage Society, Bridge, CRI, Capstone, Cambria/Troppe Note, TNC Recordings, Naxos, and New Albion, and has been broadcast extensively on national and European television and radio.

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Tickets \$20, seniors, students \$10, are available at the box office, 129 West 67th Street (212-501-3330), www.merkinconcerthall.org. Continuum's website: www.continuum-ensemble-ny.org.