



Western Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

FRIDAYS @ 12:30 SERIES

Friday, October 4, 2019
12:30 p.m., von Kuster Hall

Trio de Montréal

Axel Strauss, *violin*

Yegor Dyachkov, *cello*

Ilya Poletaev, *piano*

Piano Trio No. 4 in E minor, op. 90, B. 166 "Dumky"

Antonin Dvořak

(1841-1904)

- I. Lento maestoso – Allegro quasi doppio movimento*
- II. Poco adagio – Vivace non troppo – Vivace*
- III. Andante – Vivace non troppo – Allegretto*
- IV. Andante moderato – Allegretto scherzando – Quasi tempo di marcia*
- V. Allegro*
- VI. Lento maestoso*

From Piano Trio No. 39 in G major, Hob. XV/25

Joseph Haydn

- 3. Rondo al'Ongharese. Presto*

(1732-1809)

German violinist **Axel Strauss**, equally passionate about teaching and performing, joined the faculty of the Schulich School of Music of McGill University in 2012. Prior to moving to Montreal, he served as Professor of Violin and Chamber Music at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Axel Strauss won the international Naumburg Violin Award in New York in 1998. Later that same year, he made his American debut at the Library of Congress in Washington DC and his New York debut at Alice Tully Hall. Since then he has given recitals in major US cities, including Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles and San Francisco. In 2007 he was the violinist in the world premiere of "Two Awakenings and a Double Lullaby" – written for him by Pulitzer Prize winning composer Aaron Jay Kernis.

Mr. Strauss has performed as soloist with orchestras in Budapest, Hamburg, New York, Seoul, Shanghai, Bucharest, San Francisco and Cincinnati, among others. He has collaborated with conductors such as Maxim Shostakovich, Rico Saccani, Joseph Silverstein, and Alasdair Neale. Mr. Strauss has also served as guest concertmaster of the Berlin Philharmonic as well as the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

His recordings include the Brahms violin concerto (BPOlive), Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words", the 24 Caprices by Pierre Rode, the last three violin concertos by Rodolphe Kreutzer and the complete works for violin and piano by George Enescu (Naxos). Amadeus Press has issued a DVD featuring Axel Strauss in concert at Steinway Hall in New York City.

Mr. Strauss frequently performs at various music festivals in the US. Festival visits abroad have taken him to Germany, India, Korea and Japan. His chamber music partners have included Menahem Pressler, Kim Kashkashian, Joel Krosnick, Robert Mann and Bernhard Greenhouse.

Since his European debut in Hamburg in 1988, Axel Strauss has been heard on concert stages throughout Europe. He has given concerts in Moscow, Vilnius, Berlin, Bremen, Leipzig and Nuremberg. Concert tours have taken him to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Romania. He has also toured South America and performed in Japan with the Philharmonic Violins Berlin.

At the age of seventeen he won the silver medal at the Enescu Competition in Romania and has been recognized with many other awards, including top prizes in the Bach, Wieniawski and Kocian competitions. Mr. Strauss studied at the Music Academies of Lübeck and Rostock with Petru Munteanu. In 1996 he began working with the late Dorothy DeLay at The Juilliard School and became her teaching assistant in 1998. He has also worked with such artists as Itzhak Perlman, Felix Galimir, and Ruggiero Ricci, and at the Marlboro Music Festival with Richard Goode, Mitsuko Uchida and Andras Schiff.

Committed to expanding the trumpet's capabilities and audiences, Aaron is the founder of the Reveille Trumpet Collective (reveilletrumpet.org). Reveille has presented engaging, multimedia performances at the Banff Centre and the Sound Symposium Festival, and contributed to the commissioning of many new solo and chamber works for trumpet. Aaron is also a founding member of Reverb Brass, a quintet dedicated to exciting performances of contemporary works. After several years at Memorial University of Newfoundland, in 2012 Aaron joined the faculty of the Don Wright School of Music, Western University. Aaron holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from Yale University.

Lauded for his remarkable stage presence, depth of insight, nuance and generosity, cellist **Yegor Dyachkov** is an inspired recitalist, chamber musician and concerto soloist. Since being proclaimed Artist of the Year by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and winning the Young Canadian Musician Award in 2000, Mr. Dyachkov has gone on to perform throughout Europe, Latin America, Asia, Canada and the United States, making his New York debut at Lincoln Center in October 2000. He has appeared with major orchestras in such cities as Antwerp, Geneva, Montreal, Rio de Janeiro, Toronto and Vancouver with conductors Lev Markiz, Grant Llewellyn, JoAnn Faletta, Anne Manson, Mario Bernardi and Yannik Nézet-Séguin among others. He has also performed at numerous international festivals in Évian, Kronberg, Lanaudière, Ottawa, Prussia Cove and Tanglewood.

Mr. Dyachkov's recent and upcoming performances include return engagements at the Festival of the Sound, the Lanaudière Festival, the International Cello Festival of Canada, the Women's Musical Club of Toronto and invitations from l'Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra and Seattle Chamber Music Society.

Deeply committed to chamber music, Yegor Dyachkov has performed with the Arditti, Borromeo and St. Lawrence Quartets, pianists Jean Saulnier, John Lenehan, Martin Roscoe, Anton Kuerti, Stéphane Lemelin and Marc-André Hamelin, violinists James Clark, Jonathan Crow, Antje Weithaas, Scott St. John, Andrew Wan and Yehonatan Berick, cellists Steven Isserlis and Colin Carr, and clarinetists James Campbell and Todd Palmer. In year 2007, he founded the Magellan Ensemble, with violinist Olivier Thouin, violist

Yukari Cousineau and pianist Jean Saulnier. From 2005 until 2015, he was also part of Triple Forte, with violinist Jasper Wood and pianist David Jalbert.

Winning the Orford International Competition in 1997 led to an invitation from Chandos to record his debut CD featuring Glazunov's Concerto Ballata. Yegor Dyachkov subsequently made critically acclaimed recordings including sonatas by Brahms, works by Prokofiev and Stravinsky, violin and cello duos with Olivier Thouin (all on Analekta), the cello concerto by Dvorak (Riche Lieu), the sonatas by Shostakovich, Schnittke and Prokofiev (Pelléas, Opus Prize 2001), works by Jacques Hétu and André Prévost (Doberman-Yppan), as well as sonatas by Strauss and Pfitzner (Brioso). His performances have been widely broadcast and televised in Canada and abroad.

A champion of new music, Yegor Dyachkov reserves a prominent place to contemporary music in his repertoire. He gave the premier performances of several works that are dedicated to him: the Sonata by Jacques Hétu, Ironman for cello and orchestra and The Agate Rosary for cello and piano by Michael Oesterle, Vez for solo cello by Ana Sokolovic, as well as Menuhin : Présence, a concerto written for him by the late André Prévost. Mr. Dyachkov was soloist for the first French performance of Giya Kancheli's Diplipito for cello, counter-tenor and orchestra at Rostropovich's Evian Festival and for the North American premiere in Winnipeg. He has also been invited by Yo-Yo Ma and Sony Music to take part in the Silk Road Project.

Born in Moscow in 1974, Mr. Dyachkov studied with Aleksandr Fedorchenko in Moscow, Yuli Turovsky in Montréal and Boris Pergamenschikow in Cologne. He also had the opportunity to work with Mstislav Rostropovich, André Navarra, David Geringas and Frans Helmerson. The breadth of Yegor Dyachkov's musical commitment extends to teaching master classes and to maintaining a dialogue with young musicians. He teaches at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University, at l'Université de Montréal and at the Orford Academy in the summer.

A musician with a fiercely inquisitive mind, impeccable technique and an intensely poetic vision, **Ilya Poletaev** is an artist equally at home on the modern piano or on historical keyboards: harpsichord, fortepiano, and chamber organ. Hailed as "one of the most significant pianists of his generation" by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, he launched his career after capturing First Prize at the prestigious International Johann Sebastian Bach Competition in Leipzig in 2010 -- the only Canadian ever to win that competition. He has since appeared at the Leipzig Gewandhaus, KlavierFestival Ruhr, Dresdner MusikFesttage, Potsdam Musikfestspiele, Leipzig BachFest, Montreal Bach Festival, Philadelphia's Kimmel Center and Chamber Music Society, St. Paul's Ordway Center, Toronto's Roy Thomson Hall, Caramoor Festival, Chamber Music Northwest, and many other prestigious venues. He also was the Grand Prize winner of the 2008 Concorso Sala Gallo in Italy, a laureate of the 2008 Canadian Stepping Stone, a top prize-winner at the 2007 SEHKS harpsichord competition, and a prize-winner at the 2011 George Enescu Competition in Bucharest. In 2009 he joined the roster of Astral Artists and is currently an Astral Artist laureate.

On the modern piano, he has appeared with the Toronto Symphony, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Hartford Symphony, Moscow State Symphony Orchestra, Samara Philharmonic, Sinfonia Toronto, Orchestra Filarmonica di Cluj, collaborating with such conductors as David Robertson, Peter Oundjian, Bernhard Gueller, Rossen Milanov, Nurhan Arman, John Holloway and Leo Kraemer.

Known for the breadth and creativity of his programming choices, Poletaev has in past seasons offered solo performances ranging from the complete 2nd Book of J.S. Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier (which he performs in its entirety on both modern and historical keyboards); to traditional recitals and concerto performances of both well-known and neglected repertoire (C.P.E. Bach, Dussek, Medtner, Enescu, Nielsen, etc.), to inter-disciplinary events combining performances on different instruments, poetry readings, spoken commentary, and historical narrative.

In performing Baroque and Classical repertoire on the modern piano, an area in which he is well-known, Ilya Poletaev strives to bring together a personal vision and wide palette of instrumental colors with the most scrupulous attention to sources and historical performance techniques. "An expert harpsichordist, he played Bach on the piano as well as any I have heard...All that he played was deeply considered...His intelligence was luminous." (Berkshire Eagle). "The Bach Overture was set forth with delightfully springy rhythms, a constantly stimulating interplay of contrapuntal lines, and tone that was clear and warm with no suspicion of harshness. Stylish as it was, with intricately detailed embellishments, this was also romantic playing." (Seen and Heard International).

In his interpretations of the traditional Romantic literature, Mr. Poletaev combines the improvisatory flexibility derived from his experience with period performance practice with psychological insight and a gift for large-scale musical narrative. Of a recent performance of Schumann's Humoreske, a critic wrote: "There was no attempt to sand down Schumann's jagged edges, to soften the blows of sudden changes in thought and mood. Through a liberal amount of rhythmic distortion, Poletaev revealed the wonderful truth in Schumann's anxieties, obsessions, and wild tangents -- that his was a reality apart. Resolution (sanity) was all the more sweet in the penultimate section, which the pianist rendered in the most tender shades of sincerity." (Philadelphia Inquirer)

Among his many musical interests, Poletaev has a special devotion to the music of the great Romanian composer, George Enescu. His performances of the violin and piano works with Axel Strauss, published by Naxos in two volumes, have been hailed as "the finest readings... aside from the recordings that Enescu himself made" (American Record Guide); "formidable" (Gramophone), and "highly compelling" (The Strad). A recent performance of Enescu's Piano Sonata No. 1 at a Philadelphia Chamber Music Society recital "seemed to transport to another time and place" (Philadelphia Inquirer). In February 2017, Poletaev organized a first-ever mini-festival of Enescu's works in Canada, combining efforts by internationally renowned performers, prize-winning students and alumni of McGill University.

An avid chamber musician, Mr. Poletaev is the founding member of the Trio de Montreal (Axel Strauss, violin, and Yegor Dyachkov, cello) and Trio Séléné (Mingzhe Wang, clarinet, and Elizabeth Lara, cello). Trio Séléné's debut recording, featuring music by Fauré, Zemlinsky, and the Catalan composer Fernando Buide, has been released in May of 2018. Mr. Poletaev has also appeared alongside such vocal artists as Susan Graham, Miah Persson, James Taylor, Thomas Cooley, and Dominique Labelle; cellists Gary Hoffmann and Joshua Roman; violinists Donald Weilerstein, Colin Jacobsen, Mark Steinberg, Stephen Copes, and members of the St. Lawrence, Juilliard, and Alcan string quartets; flautist Ransom Wilson, and many others.

As a solo harpsichordist, Mr. Poletaev appeared at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, the Pierpont Morgan Library, Helicon Foundation, Ordway Center in St. Paul, Minnesota (with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, both in chamber formations and under the leadership of Christian Zacharias), Montreal's Salle Bourgie, the Aston Magna Early Music Festival, Amherst Early Music Festival, and Yale's Collection of Musical Instruments. As a continuo player, he has performed with Masaaki Suzuki, Andrew Lawrence-King, Steven Stubbs, Nicholas McGegan, Simon Carrington, Graham O'Reilly, Matthias Maute, and Helmuth Rilling. He can be heard in both solo and continuo roles on several recordings with the Yale Schola Cantorum (Bach's 1725 St. John Passion; Bertali's Missa Resurrectionis, among others) -- all issued on the ReZound label.

In addition to performing classical repertoire, Mr. Poletaev is also active as an improviser, both as a soloist and a creator of live scores for silent film.

Mr. Poletaev's performances and interviews have been broadcast on the BBC; WQXR in New York; Minnesota Public Radio; CBC Radio-Canada; Radio Berlin-Brandenburg, MDR, NDR, and WDR networks in Germany; Radio Romania; Radio Rossiya and Radio Orfei (Russian Federation), and others. His recording of George Enescu's violin and piano works with Axel Strauss has been heard on radio stations world-wide.

A dedicated teacher, Mr. Poletaev is currently Associate Professor of Piano at the Schulich School of Music at McGill University in Montreal. He is also Assistant Director at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival's Choral Week. He previously served on the faculty of Yale University as a Lecturer in Early Music. He has given numerous master classes and talks on performance practice in many of the world's most prestigious music schools, including the San Francisco Conservatory, Boston University Tanglewood Institute, the Buchman-Mehta Music Academy in Tel-Aviv, Rubin Academy in Jerusalem, Royal Conservatory in Toronto, and the Conservatorio di Milano. His students have been the recipients of many distinguished prizes and scholarships.

Mr. Poletaev began studying in Moscow at the age of six and continued his studies in Israel until he moved to Canada at the age of 14. He holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto, where he studied with pianist Marietta Orlov, harpsichordist Colin Tilney, and composition with Walter Buczynski, as well as Master's and Doctorate degrees from Yale, where he studied with Boris Berman. Mr. Poletaev currently resides in Montreal with his wife, the Romanian-born fortepianist Ruxandra Oancea, and their son Nikolay Simon.