

*University of Guelph  
College of Arts and School of Fine Art and Music Present*

# Adam Sherkin



## **THURSDAY AT NOON**

**Free Concert Series**

**Thursday, March 8 • 12:00 pm**

**Mackinnon Room 107 (Goldschmidt Room)**



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## ***Program***

- flung loose into the stars (1995)..... James Harley (b. 1959)
- Northern Frames (2013)..... Adam Sherkin (b. 1982)
- I. Ursa Minor (The Little Bear)
  - II. Cassiopeia (Queen of Aethiopia)
  - III. Cepheus (King of Aethiopia)
  - IV. Camelopardalis (The Giraffe)
  - V. Lynx (The Luminescent-Eyed)
  - VI. Ursa Major (The Big Bear)
  - VII. Ursa Minor II
  - VIII. Draco (The Dragon)
- Star Burning Blue (2000) ..... Kelly-Marie Murphy (b. 1964)
- Tagish Fires (2015) ..... Adam Sherkin
- No. 1: Octania
  - No. 2: Lacuna
  - No. 3: Adamant

## ***Program Notes***

***Flung loose into the stars (1995):*** At the end of her historical novel *The Living*, set in the Pacific Northwest, Annie Dillard includes a remarkable passage which serves as a metaphor for the awesome mystery of, and great struggle for, life, the central concern of her work:

“The heavy rope pulled at him. He carried it to the platform edge. He hitched up the knot and launched out. As he swung through the air, trembling, he saw the blackness give way below, like a parting of clouds, to a deep patch of stars on the ground. It was the pond, he hoped, the hole in the woods reflecting the sky. He judged the instant and let go; he flung himself loose into the stars.”

*flung loose into the stars* attempts to evoke something of the flavour of the experience. The music is concerned with energy; physical, emotional, musical. The amazing kinetic intensity jazz pianist Cecil Taylor conveys in his playing has been inspirational in working to that end. This piece was written in 1995 for, and dedicated to, Marc Couroux, and has been supported through the kind generosity of the Conseil des Arts et des Lettres du Québec. Copyright © 1996 by James Harley

***Northern Frames (2013):*** Constellations of stars, as observed from Earth, vary greatly depending on what part of the planet you gaze from and on what time of the year it is. Constellations in the Northern hemisphere are partly visible to those observers in the Southern Hemisphere, and partly not. Simply put, there are some northern constellations that a southern person will never see, and vice-versa. Therein lies a certain exoticism and curiosity for the unknown night sky where the picture would be completely transformed should the observer find himself suddenly on the opposite side of the globe. Particular clusters of stars also relate closely to those cultures that first looked upon them, offering a glimpse into ancient eyes and minds: a process that, today, offers us myth and meaning. Copyright © 2013 by Adam Sherkin

***Star Burning Blue (2000)*** was commissioned by the Esther Honens International Competition for Maxim Philippov. It is a single movement work lasting approximately eight minutes, and roughly depicts the life cycle of a main sequence star, a supergiant star. Main sequence stars, such as the sun, make up 90% of the stars seen from Earth. Some supergiant stars are of a high luminosity and shine with a blue light which indicates their high-temperature. The strong gravity of the massive star attracts more and more matter to it, giving it greater mass. This, in turn, magnifies the star's gravitational influence, which increases the rate at which it can gather more matter. The bigger the blue star becomes, the brighter it shines, and the faster it burns its nuclear fuel, until the inevitable stellar explosion. Then the cycle begins again in the remnants of the supernova. This piece explores a musical cycle of power and energy, where stability spins out of control and then is regained. The tempo increases, the range become more and more extreme. When the shattering finally occurs, time is slowed by relativistic effects as high energy fragments rush out into the vacuum. The irony is that this peaceful moment is created by violent destruction. As the particles of music drift, they are eventually caught in their mutual attraction and coalesce once again. Copyright © 2000 by Kelly-Marie Murphy

A new set of etudes – with a projected twelve in total – ***Tagish Fires*** is inspired by the meteorite shower which blasted the skies of Tagish Lake in northern British Columbia, on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2000. Eyewitness accounts claim trails of the fireball were visible in the sky for up to thirty minutes after impact. Further study of the reflectance spectrum of the meteorite indicates that it most likely originated from 773 Irmintraud, a D-type asteroid from the outer reaches of the Asteroid Belt. Analyses have also shown that Tagish Lake fragments are of a primitive type, containing unchanged stellar dust granules that may have been part of the cloud of material that created our solar system and Sun. The meteorite contained an abundance of organic materials, including amino acids. "Pristine" Tagish Lake meteorites, totalling more than 850 g are currently held in the collections at the Royal Ontario Museum.

## ***Biography***

Composer and pianist **Adam Sherkin** is a dynamic and versatile musician who commands a multi-dimensional approach to performance and composition. A native of Toronto, Adam graduated from the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory and the Royal College of Music, London. His works have been premiered at the Glenn Gould Studio, the Luminato Festival, the Spotlight Festival (Waterloo), the King's Lynn Festival (Norfolk), The Bridgewater Hall (Manchester), The Warehouse and the National Portrait Gallery in London. Adam has appeared in performance at the Four Seasons Centre, the Toronto Centre for the Arts, The St Lawrence Centre for the Arts, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Covent Garden and the Royal Albert Hall. Sherkin's debut solo album, *As At First*, was released in November of 2012 on the Centrediscs label.

[www.adamsherkin.com](http://www.adamsherkin.com)

# THURSDAY AT NOON

## Concert Series

### Winter Semester 2018 - Celebrating 50 Years of Music Making

Concerts start at 12:00 p.m. Thursdays in MacKinnon Room 107 (Goldschmidt Room)

Everyone welcome and admission is FREE – donations gratefully appreciated.

- March 8** ..... **Flung Loose Into The Stars**. Pianist/composer Adam Sherkin offers a view onto the distinctive canon of Canadian piano works inspired by the Cosmos. From the ancient astronomical traditions of our own ancestors here on Earth to super-giant main sequence stars in the solar systems and beyond, this music attests to the significance of the night sky as a characteristically *Canadian* impulse for creativity. Professor James Harley's own contribution, *flung loose into the stars*, is featured on the programme. This concert is part of the annual Creative Music Symposium.
- March 15** ..... **Angela Park, piano and Scott St. John, violin**, perform Schubert Fantasy in C major and Brahms Sonata No. 1 in G major.
- March 22** ..... **Student Soloists Day**, featuring performances by the talented SOFAM Applied Music students.
- March 29** ..... **Student Soloists Day**, featuring performances by the talented SOFAM Applied Music students.

### Ensemble Concerts Winter Semester 2018

- 7:00 p.m.** ..... **University of Guelph Jazz Ensemble with Conductor Ted Warren**  
**Thursday, April 5** Manhattans Pizza Bistro and Music Club, 951 Gordon St., Guelph - \$2 cover charge
- 8:00 p.m.** ..... **University of Guelph Concert Winds Ensemble with Conductor John Goddard**  
**Friday, April 6** **Shadow and Light** at Harcourt Memorial United Church, 87 Dean Ave., Guelph  
General Admission \$10, Students/Seniors \$5
- 8:00 p.m.** ..... **University of Guelph Choirs with Conductor Marta McCarthy**  
**Saturday, April 7** **This Thirsty Land: A World Premiere** at St. Georges Church, 99 Woolwich St., Guelph  
General Admission \$15, Students/Seniors \$10
- 1:00 p.m.** ..... **University of Guelph CME with Conductor Ben Grossman**  
**Sunday, April 8** 10C, 42 Carden St., Guelph - \$5 cover charge
- 3:00 p.m.** ..... **University of Guelph Chamber Ensemble with Conductor Henry Janzen**  
**Sunday, April 8** MacKinnon room 107, Goldschmidt Room, University of Guelph

For more information on the winter 2018 series, contact Vicki Isotamm ([visotamm@uoguelph.ca](mailto:visotamm@uoguelph.ca)) (519) 824-4120 ext.52991



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