

# ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

Founding Music Director & Conductor Alex Pauk

For Immediate Release – December 14th, 2022

## ESPRIT ORCHESTRA PRESENTS:

### ***TAIKO LIVE!***

Esprit Orchestra's **40th Anniversary Season** continues at **Koerner Hall** on **Wednesday, January 25th at 8:00pm** with ***TAIKO LIVE!*** as part of the **Royal Conservatory of Music's 21C Music Festival**. In quintessential Esprit fashion, **Music Director Alex Pauk's** bold programming sees the fusion of diverse cultures and traditions, first sweeping listeners away to the lush, vibrant shores of Bali in **Colin McPhee's *Tabuh-tabuhan*** and then into the exhilarating, heart-thumping tradition of **Japanese Taiko drumming** in **Maki Ishii's *Mono-prism*** with Esprit being joined by Toronto based taiko ensemble **Nagata Shachu**. The evening is highlighted by an appearance of the brilliant rising-star Canadian cellist **Cameron Crozman** as soloist in the **World Premiere** performance of the **Esprit commissioned *Overbound***, for amplified solo cello, electronics and orchestra by the daring and wildly inventive composer **James O'Callaghan**. Composer **Alexina Louie** will moderate a **Pre-Concert Chat** at **7:15pm**.

Esprit's season will continue with a **Spring/Summer subscription series** and the return of the annual **New Wave Festival**. Details will be outlined in a forthcoming announcement.

An audience favourite back by popular demand, **Colin McPhee's *Tabuh-tabuhan*** holds a treasured place on this program and in the history of Esprit. McPhee was inspired by the traditional techniques of **Balinese gamelan** and his years conducting musicological research in Bali. He was the first composer of Western music to visit the verdant Indonesian islands. Constructed around a "nuclear gamelan" comprised of two pianos, celeste, marimba, xylophone and glockenspiel that mimic the various gongs and chimes in which Bali's musical tradition is rooted, each of *Tabuh-tabuhan's* three movements are underscored by syncopation and shifting metre with a distinctly percussive quality. Esprit has long been linked to the music of McPhee, particularly thanks to a series of recordings in the 1990's by Esprit of many works by McPhee including *Tabuh-tabuhan*.

Keeping in the spirit of fusion and experimentation, the **World Premiere** performance of ***Overbound*** by the Berlin-based Canadian composer and sound artist **James O'Callaghan** sees the acoustic orchestra meet electronic enhancement in the most dynamic, electric and theatrical of fashions. Set for solo cello with amplification, octophonic (surround-sound) electronics and orchestra, *Overbound's* live electronic manipulation interacts sensitively with the solo cellist thanks to suspended microphones near the soloist's head before sounding to the audience through eight loud-speakers situated throughout the hall. The exceptional young Canadian cellist **Cameron Crozman**, for whom this work was composed, will perform as soloist in his first appearance with Esprit.

The conclusion of the program sees another compelling convergence of East-meets-West, by way of Japanese composer **Maki Ishii's *Mono-prism***, for Japanese Taiko drums and orchestra. Toronto-based Taiko ensemble **Nagata Shachu** returns to perform this work with Esprit subsequent to last performing it with the orchestra in 2018. Informed by the composer's experience and education in both Eastern and Western music, *Mono-prism* juxtaposes the "monochromatic" and homogenous character of the traditional Japanese drums against the "prismatic" and vibrant colours of the Western orchestra. Traditionally, taiko drums have been associated with religious festivals with the aim of awakening heavenly spirits. *Mono-prism*, in its reverential fusion of culture and tradition, illustrates an inspired, emotional portrait of the natural world and humanity and promises to leave a meaningful impression on all who experience the thrilling intensity of this music.

Esprit Orchestra Presents: **TAIKO LIVE!**  
**21C Music Festival Presented by the Royal Conservatory of Music**  
Wednesday, January 25th, 2023  
8:00 pm Concert | 7:15 pm Pre-Concert Talk

**Alex Pauk** – Conductor  
**Cameron Crozman**- Cello  
**James O’Callaghan**- Electronics  
**Nagata Shachu**- Japanese Taiko drumming ensemble  
Pre-Concert Chat moderated by composer **Alexina Louie**

**Programme:**

**Colin McPhee** (Canada)  
Wesley Shen, *piano*  
Stephanie Chua, *piano*

**Tabuh-tabuhan** (1936)  
for two pianos & orchestra

**James O’Callaghan** (Canada)  
Cameron Crozman, *cello*

**Overbound** (2022)\*\*  
concerto for amplified cello, octophonic electronics & orchestra

**Maki Ishii** (Japan)  
Nagata Shachu, *Taiko drums*

**Mono-prism** (1976)  
for Japanese Taiko drums & orchestra

\*\*World Premiere & Esprit Commission

**ESPRIT ORCHESTRA**  
**Royal Conservatory of Music TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning**  
**273 Bloor Street West**

Individual concert tickets start at: Adult \$45; Senior 65+ \$45; Under 30 \$27; Student \$25  
Please call (416) 408 0208 or visit [espritorchestra.com](http://espritorchestra.com)

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Esprit Orchestra is Canada’s only full-sized orchestra devoted exclusively to performing and promoting new orchestral music. Esprit Orchestra gratefully acknowledges Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Arts Council, Azrieli Foundation, SOCAN Foundation, Ontario Arts Foundation, The Michael and Sonja Koerner Charitable Foundation, The Mary-Margaret Webb Foundation, Tim & Frances Price, Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne, Power Corporation of Canada, RBC Foundation, The Max Clarkson Family Foundation, The Charles H. Ivey Foundation, The Amphion Foundation and Anonymous for their generous support.

Media Contact:  
Cameron Dubé  
[cameron@espritorchestra.com](mailto:cameron@espritorchestra.com)  
(416) 815-7887