

CONTINUUM® - 44th Season
Cheryl Seltzer & Joel Sachs, Directors
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SPOTLIGHT ON GEORGIA
New Music from an Ancient Tradition

CONTINUUM, Cheryl Seltzer and Joel Sachs, directors, presents the third concert of its 44th New York season on Sunday, May 9, 7 PM, at Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center, 129 West 67th Street.

A few years ago Continuum had the good fortune to perform in the Georgian Republic. The players were struck, not only by the beauty of this mountainous country and its imposing religious sites from antiquity, but also by the unusual musicality of the populace. In particular, a strong vocal-choral tradition had been passed down some 2000 years, permeating both religious and secular life. Georgian-born contemporary composers have been nurtured in that heritage and have created extraordinary music.

Continuum's program opens with exquisite settings of Georgian melodies for string quartet, *Quartet Miniatures* (1951-1978), composed over his career by pioneering progressive SULKHAN TSINTSADZE (1925-1992). In contrast, works of younger composers ZURAB NADAREISHVILI, represented by *Cadenza for Viola* (2007), and HANA AJIASHVILI, by her vocal chamber work *My God, The Soul You Placed Within Me*, on poems of Yehuda Amichai (2007), have a strong melodic thrust but in an international contemporary language. Nadareishvili (b. 1957), who teaches composition and works in film in Tbilisi, has had highly-acclaimed performances previously in the U.S. Ajiashvili (b. 1972) immigrated to Israel in 2001 and has won important awards in her new country.

Continuum will feature JOSEF BARDANASHVILI (b. 1948), who joins us from Israel, where he immigrated in 1995, for the World Premiere of a monumental work *Farewell Song - In Memory of My Parents*, a double concerto for clarinet, cello, and string orchestra (2008). Also to be performed is his "*Sola*" for *Guitar* (2006). Bardanashvili, a celebrated composer in Georgia, has had great success in Israel, including a recent major production of his opera, *A Journey to the End of the Millennium* by Israeli Opera. Continuum also pays homage to an old friend, the internationally-revered GIYA KANCHELI in his 75th-birthday year. Continuum gave a Kancheli retrospective at Alice Tully Hall in 1995. The work on the forthcoming concert is his transcendent *Psalm 23* from *Exil*, for soprano, ensemble and tape, given its U.S. Premiere by Continuum in 1994. Aside from this work and the World Premiere of Bardanashvili, compositions will be heard in their U.S. premieres.

Soloists are Mary Mackenzie, soprano; Moran Katz, clarinet; Oren Fader, guitar; Renée Jolles, violin; Stephanie Griffin, viola; Kristina Reiko Cooper, cello; Cheryl Seltzer, piano; Joel Sachs, conductor; with String Orchestra.

Continuum's signature Retrospective Series has been a key part of New York's musical life since the organization's founding in 1966. Its innovative programming has been praised for introducing New York to unknown extraordinary composers from around the world, many of whom later achieve 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, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, Indonesia, and Korea. In May, Continuum will perform at the Beijing Modern Music Festival. 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.

This concert is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency, the Amphion Fund, the Aaron Copland Fund, Meet The Composer's Cary New Music Performance Fund, the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, the Virgil Thomson Foundation, and other private and business donors.

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.