

Sonntag, 12. November 2023, 20:00 Uhr

Mivos Quartet

**WIEN
MODERN**

T alte
schmiede
wien

Olivia De Prato (Violine)

Maya Bennardo (Violine)

Victor Lowrie Tafoya (Viola)

Nathan Watts (Violoncello)

In Koproduktion mit Wien Modern

Programm

Raven Chacon
(*1977)

The Journey of the Horizontal People (2016) (**ÖEA**)
Kompositionsauftrag Kronos Quartet

**Chikako
Morishita**
(*1981)

Doll Time (2019) (**ÖEA**)
Kompositionsauftrag Mivos Quartett und Rainy Days Luxembourg

Clara Iannotta
(*1983)

You crawl over seas of granite (2019–2020)
für verstärktes Streichquartett

Andile Khumalo
(*1978)

Voices from the Ancestors (2022-2023)(**ÖEA**)
Kompositionsauftrag Mivos Quartett und ECLAT Festival

George Lewis
(*1952)

Playing with Seeds. Streichquartett 2.5(2017)
Kompositionsauftrag Mivos Quartett und ECLAT Festival

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Raven Chacon (b. 1977 Navajo Nation) is a composer of chamber music, a performer of experimental noise music, and an installation artist. He performs regularly as a solo artist as well as with numerous ensembles in the Southwest and beyond. Chacon's work explores sounds of acoustic handmade instruments overdriven through electric systems and the direct and indirect audio feedback responses from their interactions. He won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2022 for his work *Voicemail Mass*.

"*The Journey of the Horizontal People* is a future creation story telling of a group of people traveling from west to east, across the written page, contrary to the movement of the sun, but involuntarily and unconsciously allegiant to the trappings of time. With their bows, these wanderers sought out others like them, knowing that they could survive by finding these other clans who resided in the east, others who shared their linear cosmologies. It is told that throughout the journey, in their own passage of time, this group became the very people they were seeking."

Chikako Morishita (b. 1981 Japan) is a composer and pianist. Her works explore a musical language in which the performer's and audience's subjectivity plays a key part in the formation of a composition's core meaning. Her recent works focus on the alienation brought about by the ventriloquism effect where the performers repeatedly discard their normal state of being as instrumentalists leading to a decoupling between what is seen, heard, and imagined by the audience. The movements between different modes of performance and attention from the performers and their potential to disrupt the reception by the audience is her unique approach to creating an interplay between performers'/audiences' subjective and objective worlds to create a distinctive moment. PhD in composition at Huddersfield University in the UK. After spending over a decade in Huddersfield and Berlin, she now lives and works in Tokyo.

"*Doll Time* for string quartet was written as part of my One Arm series which I describe as a "theatre of strangeness". The focus of the work is on ventriloquism effects between the performer and their performance as means to bring an interplay of fiction and non-fiction onto the stage. Shifting performative modes between a kind of first and third-person stance result in a slippage or interstice in which the performer might 'communicate' with him or herself. Commissioned by Rainy Days Luxembourg and premiered by the Mivos Quartet in November 2019."

Clara Iannotta (b. 1983 Italy) is an Italian composer and curator based in Berlin. Iannotta has been a fellow of the Berliner Künstlerprogramm des DAAD in 2013, Villa Médicis (Académie de France à Rome) in 2018–19, and the recipient of several prizes including the Ernst von Siemens Composers' Prize 2018, Hindemith-Preis 2018, Una Vita nella Musica Giovani 2019, Premio Abbiati 2021. Her three portrait albums *A Failed Entertainment* (Edition RZ), *Earthing* (Wergo), and *Moult* (Kairos) were all awarded a place on the Bestenliste der deutschen Schallplattenkritik (German Record Critics' Award). She is a member of the Academy of Arts in Berlin. Iannotta is professor in composition at the University of Music and Performing Arts (mdw) in Vienna since 2023, and the artistic director of the Bludenzener Tage zeitgemäßer Musik since 2014.

Andile Khumalo (b. 1978 South Africa) is currently a music lecturer at Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg. His music studies in composition took him to the University of KwaZulu - Natal before he moved to Columbia University in New York, where he studied composition with Tristan Murail, Fabien Levy and George Lewis. As well as to Stuttgart where he studied composition with Marco Stroppa. Stroppa introduced Khumalo to spectralism, a sensitive approach towards constructing sound as the foundation for composition. This was further developed during his studies with Tristan Murail. Sound as the foundation is one of the fundamental aspects of the amaXhosa people of South Africa, where bow instruments provide the fundamentals from which the overtone melodies are developed. This sensitivity to sound is found in the music and their language and is ultimately part of their daily living experiences. For example, a change in intonation could easily change the meaning of a word or

sentence without changing how it is written. The change experienced in sound deeply affects the listener's connection between the lived experiences and the spiritual world. Khumalo's studies with George Lewis heightened the search for one's own identity. In deepening one's own understanding of oneself, as Ngunis and Africans, we believe in a deeper connection with the spiritual world of our ancestors. In his recent work, he has been deeply interested in our sense of existential spirituality through sound.

“Voices from the Ancestors (2022/23) is like a journey to find my spiritual identity, but it also provokes an interrogation of the connections between the physical and spiritual worlds. In understanding the physical world, the Nguni people believe that our ancestors guide us through life. When someone passes on, they transition to the spiritual world, the world of the Amadlozi (the unseen but forever present voices). Voices from the Ancestors interacts with poetry in ways that invite us to hear words as spaces of silenced voices and sound as the poetic amplification of suppressed voices.”

George Lewis (b. 1952 USA), String Quartet 2.5, “Playing With Seeds” (2017)

The anthropologist Paul Richards has spent over thirty years studying rice cultivation among the Mende-speaking population of the village of Mogbuama in Sierra Leone. Richards understands shifting cultivation as a system of improvisation that requires not only experience and intuition, but also knowledge of landscape, soil, weather, and at least 45 different rice varieties. Richards likens this form of improvisation to the musical, while also pointing out the difference between the safety net of the structured art performance context and a real-time, real-world practice in which false moves can result in hunger, debt, starvation, and death.

In this society, women are the principal investigators: cataloguing plant varieties, introducing new growing techniques, predicting and monitoring their impact on the environment, coping with contingencies, and serving as repositories of memory for outcomes. Seed experimentation by women on small plots--“playing with seeds--has resulted in the emergence of new and hardier varieties of rice, and it is this practice that presents the analogy for how this string quartet operates. The music is “grown” from “seeds” that are developed into new “varietals” through trajectories of register, temporal flux (stretching/compressing), sudden reversals of apparent fortune, and the nomadism that is central to shifting cultivation.

I want to suggest that like all listening, an engagement with this work constitutes a form of nomadic improvisation--not by the performers, who are dealing with fully notated music--but on the part of audiences. In Mogbuaman society, farming sites belong to “the living, the dead, and the yet unborn.” That’s actually quite a fine situation for a piece of music. This quartet was written for the Mivos Quartet, with great appreciation for their brilliance.