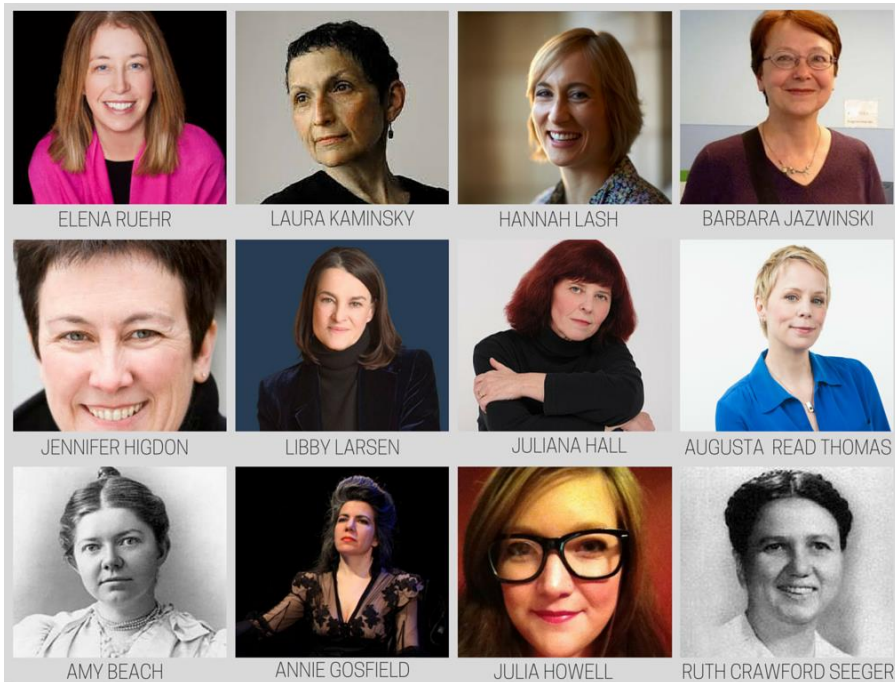


Odaline de la Martinez's 6<sup>th</sup> London Festival of American Music champions female composers' music in the majority of the 19 premieres



**London Festival of American Music**

The Warehouse, London

**6-11 November 2016**



Cuban conductor and composer Odaline de la Martinez announces the programme for the 6<sup>th</sup> London Festival of American Music, with a focus on female composers and performers. The Festival will showcase works by both male and female composers, with an unusually high percentage of works by the latter (50%). Martinez has also programmed a significant number of premieres - 19 UK premieres and 7 world premieres - throughout the festival. Martinez initiated the festival ten years ago and it has since become a biennial fixture to celebrate contemporary American music in the

UK. The aim of the festival is to promote the work of outstanding American composers, well established in the States but less known to UK audiences.

*Martinez comments: "This year, even more than previous years, American female composers take centre stage alongside their male counterparts. We have young newly-emerging composers such as Julia Howell alongside established ones such as Augusta Read Thomas and Jennifer Higdon."*

In 1984, musical pioneer Odaline de la Martinez became the first woman to conduct at the BBC Proms. 2016 marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her ensemble

Lontano, which was founded in 1976 to champion new music - they have commissioned, premiered and recorded hundreds of new works.

The 2016 Festival begins with a film viewing of Selected Scenes from Part I of Martinez's Slavery Opera Trilogy - *Imoinda*. The film was created following Martinez's success winning Opera America's Opera Grant for Female Composers in 2015. Martinez was one of seven winners of the 2015 Female Composers Discovery Grant, which is funded by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. The Trilogy is the first Afro-Cuban opera on slavery and uses a libretto by Joan Anim-Addo who will speak about the opera during the viewing. *Imoinda* - was commissioned by the Caribbean Women Writers' Alliance (CWWA) with funds from the Heritage Lottery Fund, England. Part II of the Trilogy - *The Crossing* - was performed at the 2014 London Festival of American Music and Martinez aims to perform the whole Trilogy at the 7<sup>th</sup> Festival in 2018.

The New London Chamber Choir, Lontano, and American viola soloist Stephen Upshaw will perform the first concert of the Festival, conducted by Martinez. The programme consists of music by the late American composer Earle Brown, including, *Tracking Pierrot* and two interpretations of his *New Piece*. The programme also includes Morton Feldman's *Rothko Chapel* to mark the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the composer's birth.

On 8 November, the Fidelio Trio - Darragh Morgan, Adi Tal and Mary Dullea-perform several premieres, including the world premiere of Annie Gosfield's *Cranks and Cactus needles* and the UK premiere of Jennifer Higdon's *Pale Yellow*.

The third concert of the Festival features further premieres by John Harbison, Hannah Lash, Charles Shadle and Peter Child. Martinez has collaborated with Peter Child numerous times before and his works were featured in the 2014 Festival. Charles Shadle and John Harbison also had premieres in the last Festival, including the world premiere of Shadle's *Red Cedar*. Hannah Lash will be guest harpist in the UK premiere of her work *Three Shades Without Angles*.

Prior to this concert a panel of visiting women composers will be led by leading journalist of women in music.

Acclaimed British soprano Nadine Benjamin returns to the Festival to perform a programme of songs by female composers with pianist Susanna Stranders. Benjamin starred in Martinez's *The Crossing* in the 2014 festival alongside tenor John-Colyn Gyeanty. Odaline de la Martinez will take part in a free pre-concert *Meet the Composer* session to talk about all the composers being performed in the programme.

Odaline de la Martinez conducts her Lontano ensemble for the final concert of the Festival, in a programme entirely made up of UK and world premieres. The ensemble will be performing works by female composers Jennifer Higdon,

Augusta Read Thomas, Julia Howell, Laura Kaminsky and Barbara Jazwinski in addition to work by Carlos R. Carrillo and Fred Lerdahl. This concert also marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lontano.

## 2016 PROGRAMME

**6 November | 6:30pm**

The Warehouse, London

FILM: Selected scenes from opera *Imoinda* by Odaline de la Martinez, with a talk about the opera from librettist Joan Anim Addo.

**6 November | 7:30pm**

The Warehouse, London

**New London Chamber Choir**

**Lontano**

**Stephen Upshaw** *viola*

**Odaline de la Martinez** *conductor*

Earle Brown *New Piece* (1<sup>st</sup> version)

Earle Brown *Tracking Pierrot*

Earle Brown *New Piece* (2<sup>nd</sup> version)

Morton Feldman *Rothko Chapel*

**8 November | 7:30pm**

The Warehouse, London

*Pre-concert talk at 6:45pm with the composers*

**Darragh Morgan** *violin*

**Adi Tal** *cello*

**Mary Dullea** *piano*

Orlando Jacinto Garcia

*Entanglements* (London premiere)

John McDonald *Music for Piano Trio*

Michael Hersch *Trio*

David Ludwig *Slow Hora* (UK premiere)

Jennifer Higdon *Pale Yellow* (UK premiere)

Annie Gosfield *Cranks and Cactus needles* (World premiere)

Michael Daugherty *Regrets Only*

Zack Browning *Blockhouse* (UK premiere)

**9 November | 7:30pm**

The Warehouse, London

*Female Composers' Panel: at 6:45pm with Hannah Lash, Barbara Jazwinski, Laura Kaminsky, Julia Howell, and Elena Ruehr. This panel will be led by a leading journalist of women in music.*

**Lontano**

**Odaline de la Martinez** *conductor*

**Hannah Lash** *harp*

John Harbison *Chaconne* (UK Premiere)

Hannah Lash *Three Shades*

*Without Angels* (UK Premiere)

Ruth Crawford Seeger *Sonata for violin and piano*

Hannah Lash *Subtilior Lamento* (UK Premiere)

Charles Shadle *The Old Place* (World Premiere)

Peter Child *Elegy* (UK Premiere)

Elena Ruehr *Lucy* (World Premiere) *Commissioned Work*

**10 November | 7:30pm**

The Warehouse, London

*Pre-concert talk at 6:45pm with*

*Odaline de la Martinez*

**Nadine Benjamin** *soprano*

**Susanna Stranders** *piano*

Amy Beach *Three Browning Songs* Opus 44

1. *The Year's at the Spring*

2. *Ah, Love but a day*

3. *I Send my Heart up to Thee*

Amy Beach *Three Shakespeare Songs* Opus

1. *O Mistress Mine*

2. *Take, O take those lips away*

3. *Fairy Lullaby*

Odaline de la Martinez *After Sylvia*

1. *Morning Song*
2. *Lady Lazarus*
3. *Out of the Depths*
4. *Comeback*

Juliana Hall *Upon This Summer's Day*, 8 songs on poems by Emily Dickinson

- 1 - *Whose are the little beds, I asked*
- 2 - *Bloom - is Result - to meet a Flower*
- 3 - *I tend my flowers for thee*
- 4 - *Perhaps you'd like to buy a flower*
- 5 - *The Daisy follows soft the Sun*
- 6 - *God made a little Gentian*
- 7 - *Apparently with no surprise*
- 8 - *When Roses cease to bloom, Sir*

Jennifer Higdon *Aria*

Libby Larsen *Try Me Good King!*

1. *Katherine of Aragon*
2. *Anne Boleyn*
3. *Jane Seymour*

4. *Anne of Cleves*

5. *Katherine Howard*

**11 November | 7:30pm**

The Warehouse, London

*Pre-concert talk at 6:45pm with*

*Julia Howell, Carlos Carrillo,*

*Laura Kaminsky and Barbara*

*Jazwinski*

**Lontano**

**Odaline de la Martinez conductor**

Jennifer Higdon *Smash* (UK premiere)

Augusta Read Thomas *Scat* (UK premiere)

Julia Howell *Newly Commissioned Work* (World premiere)

Carlos R. Carrillo *de febriles formas se forma el futuro* (World premiere)

Laura Kaminsky *Inlets* (UK premiere)

Fred Lerdahl *Give and Take* (UK premiere)

Barbara Jazwinski *Newly Commissioned Work* (World Premiere)

Odaline de la Martinez

***"It was her conducting, and her galvanising personality, that made an even more striking impression. New York is full of top notch ensembles that play contemporary music accurately, even brilliantly. But the level of pointed, sinuous musicality that Ms. de la Martinez elicited from the Music Today players was unusual".***

The New York Times



Born in Cuba and raised in the United States, composer and conductor Odaline de la Martinez is one of the Britain's most dynamic and gifted musicians. Through the years she has established an international reputation as one of the most exciting and versatile pioneers of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century music. In 1984 Martinez became the first woman in history to conduct a BBC Promenade Concert at the Royal Albert Hall, and 1987 she was awarded the Villa Lobos medal from the Brazilian government in recognition of her outstanding work promoting and conducting his music. Martinez was made a fellow of the Royal Academy of Music in 1990, and to this day she is

in demand throughout the world both as an orchestra and opera conductor, and with her ensemble Lontano. Her conducting repertoire ranges from Mozart symphonies to the latest contemporary music.

Martinez attended Tulane University, New Orleans. She founded Lontano in 1976 whilst studying composition at the Royal Academy of Music, and the ensemble's impact on the perception of new music has been profound and enduring. With Lontano she commissions, produces, performs and records with the primary aim of bringing to the fore the work of living contemporary composers, female composers from all periods, and Latin American classical music. The ensemble's sphere of activity includes contemporary opera, music theatre, concerts, workshops, education projects, tours, broadcasts and recordings.

Always at the front of music innovation, Martinez' ensemble was one of the first ensembles to form its own record company when in 1992 it established the LORELT label. Now with a catalogue of 39 recordings, LORELT features soloists as well as other ensembles and is noted for its archive of important and often neglected compositions. Odaline de la Martinez is also trustee of The Mornington Trust, who together with **Lontano** has been responsible community and educational work in Waltham Forest and other London boroughs since 2000. Presently the charity is involved in an eight-year project working with Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities in the East of London.

Lontano

***“There are concerts that make you realise what you’ve been missing...The first half of Thursday’s Lontano concert at St John’s, Smith Square, provided the answer”***

The Independent



Lontano's impact on the perception of new music has been profound and enduring. Since its inception in 1976 by conductor/composer Odaline de la Martinez and flautist Ingrid Culliford, Lontano has established an international reputation as one of the most exciting and versatile exponents of 20th and 21st century music.



Lontano commissions, produces, performs and records with the primary aim of bringing to the fore the work of contemporary British and American composers, Women composers and Latin American classical repertoire. The ensemble's sphere of activity includes contemporary opera, music theatre, concerts, workshops, education projects, tours, broadcasts and recordings. Performances feature some of the most noted, inventive and radical names in contemporary composition including Judith Weir, Martin Butler, Roberto Sierra, Errollyn Wallen, Nicola le Fanu,

Peter Sculthorpe, Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Chen Yi, Lindsay Cooper, John Harbison and Steve Reich.

Lontano's global allure has resulted in performances as far a field as Istanbul (residency, Turkish-British Women Composers Week), Zagreb (performance of Jenni Ridenti's opera *Inanna*, at the Zagreb Biennale Festival), USA, Canada, Mexico, South and Central America. Activities include performances at the Huddersfield and Cheltenham International Festivals, Chard Festival of Women in Music, the Bath Festival, the BBC Proms, the premiere of Paul Barker's opera *Stone Angels* at the Bloomsbury Theatre, the enormously successful *Émigrés* Series on London's Southbank and the premier of Jenni Ridenti's opera *Spirit Child*.

Lontano gave a very successful residency at MIT - the Massachusetts Institute of Technology - as part of MIT's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. *Dream-Hunter*, a newly commissioned opera by Nicola LeFanu was premiered in the autumn of 2011 with a Welsh tour supported by a grant from the Arts Council Wales as well as three London performances at Wilton's Music Hall in February 2012. Lontano's 4<sup>th</sup> **London Festival of American Music** took place in October of 2012 and featured the UK Premiere of John Harbison's chamber opera *Full Moon in March*. 2013 saw Lontano participating in several UK Festivals as well CD recordings for Lorelt. The 5<sup>th</sup> **London Festival of American Music**, that took place in November 2014 featured the UK Premiere of Odaline de la Martinez's opera *The Crossing*, Eclectic Voices, Nadine Benjamin and John Coleyn Geyantey soloists, conductor Scott Stroman.

In March 2015 Lontano undertook a tour of Northeast USA with residencies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at State University of New York at Binghamton. Later that year Lontano recorded Dame Ethel Smyth's 4<sup>th</sup> opera *Boatswain's Mate* to be released by Retrospect Opera this summer.

<http://www.lontano.co.uk>

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