

Three-day festival revives music silenced by the Nazis

Elysium Between Two Continents commemorates the 100th anniversary of the International Society for Contemporary Music with music by exiled composers

NEW YORK, NY, USA, April 15, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Elysium Between Two Continents](#), the NYC-based nonprofit organization fighting anti-Semitism through the means of art and academic dialogue, will present a three-day music festival entitled

Innovators in Exile: 100 Years of the International Society for New Music. The festival, which will be held in various music venues throughout New York City, is presented in collaboration with The [Leo Baeck Institute](#) New York, the American Society for Jewish Music, the Austrian Cultural Forum NYC, and the Exilarte Center for Banned Music under the auspices of American baritone Thomas Hampson.

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In 1922, a group of musicians organized a festival in Salzburg to showcase modern music by composers from around the world. An extant image from the festival features a group of serious-faced modern composers, who did not yet know their fate: the majority of those pictured would be exiled to the United States as the rise of Nazi ideology linked modernism with Jewishness and Bolshevism. Most of these composers, in the midst of or on the precipice of vibrant careers, are now virtually unknown.

Elysium will honor the centennial of this 1922 festival with its own three-day music festival featuring the works of these exiled composers, featuring music composed after each composer's respective emigration. Since much of the music comes from archives, this is a rare opportunity to hear this music performed live.



American baritone Thomas Hampson, the patron of the festival, said of this important musical rediscovery: "The denial of our cultural heritage and the subsequent persecution of the artistic personalities of the mid-20th century remains a necessary and fascinating subject to explore. I am proud to support this extraordinary festival where we can learn from the abuses of our political past and celebrate the music that has always belonged to us all and was denied by a few."

Founded in 1983 by Artistic Director Gregorij von Leitis, Elysium Between Two Continents has tirelessly revitalized the artistic works of composers unjustly forgotten due to racism and anti-Semitism. Michael Lahr, the Program Director of Elysium, is the creative mind behind the concept of the festival, and [Alexis Rodda](#), Elysium's Program Coordinator, curated the music for each concert. Jeannie Im will direct each of the three concerts.

The first evening of the festival on April 20th kicks off at 6:30 PM with talks by scholar Michael Haas (exil.arte) and researcher Alexis Rodda (soprano, Program Coordinator of Elysium Between Two Continents, and doctoral candidate at CUNY Graduate Center.) Held at the Leo and Julia Forchheimer Auditorium at the Center for Jewish History, 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011, the first concert features chamber music played by members of the Kodak Quartet (Edgar Donati, violin; Martin Noh, violin; Daniel Spink, viola; and Blake Kitayama, cello), pianist Vladimir Rumyantsev, violinist Vartan Mailiantz, and cellist Tamar Sagiv, and vocal ensemble pieces sung by Jeannie Im (soprano), Alexis Rodda (soprano), and Michael Protacio (tenor).

The second evening of the festival will be held on April 21st at 7:00 PM at the Marc A. Scorca Hall at Opera America, 330 7th Avenue, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10001 and features chamber music works from each of the exiled composers. Instrumentalists Shaleah Feinstein (violin), Sam Parrini (violin), Marcus Stevenson (viola), Lydia Rhea (cello), and Jason Wirth (piano) will play.

The final evening of the festival will be held on April 24th at 6:30 PM the Austrian Cultural Forum New York, 11 East 52nd Street, New York, NY 10022 and will feature all vocal works, with singers Jeannie Im, Alexis Rodda, Michael Protacio, and Bruce Rameker (baritone) and Dan Franklin Smith on piano.

The concerts are free or by voluntary donation only. Information about ticketing for each event can be found at: <https://lahrvonleitisacademy.eu/events/current-upcoming/>

"The hundredth anniversary of the International Society for Contemporary Music reminds us that many of the composers that were celebrated there are completely forgotten to history through no fault of their own," says Michael Lahr, Program Director of Elysium. "This festival will give modern audiences the opportunity to hear the music these composers created while they were grappling with the unimaginable difficulties of being refugees in a strange new land."

Alexis Rodda

Elysium Between Two Continents

+1 201-790-3055

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