



Jacques  
**HÉTU**

**Complete Chamber Works for Strings**  
**String Quartets Nos. 1 and 2 • Sérénade • Sextet**

**New Orford String Quartet • Steven Dann, Viola**  
**Colin Carr, Cello • Timothy Hutchins, Flute**



Jacques  
**HÉTU**  
(1938-2010)

## Complete Chamber Works for Strings

	<b>String Quartet No. 1, Op. 19 (1972)</b>	<b>18:18</b>
1	<b>Allegro</b>	<b>4:10</b>
2	<b>Andante</b>	<b>6:29</b>
3	<b>Andante – Vivace</b>	<b>3:01</b>
4	<b>Allegro</b>	<b>4:38</b>
	<b>String Quartet No. 2, Op. 50 (1991)</b>	<b>18:16</b>
5	<b>Adagio</b>	<b>6:54</b>
6	<b>Vivace</b>	<b>4:36</b>
7	<b>Andante</b>	<b>6:46</b>
8	<b>Scherzo, Op. 54 (1992)</b>	<b>6:13</b>
	<b>Adagio and Rondo, Op. 3, No. 1a (1960)</b>	<b>9:09</b>
9	<b>Adagio</b>	<b>4:57</b>
10	<b>Rondo</b>	<b>4:12</b>
	<b>Sérénade, Op. 45 (1988)</b>	<b>10:23</b>
11	<b>Prélude</b>	<b>2:52</b>
12	<b>Nocturne</b>	<b>4:52</b>
13	<b>Danse</b>	<b>2:39</b>
14	<b>Sextet, Op. 71 (2004)</b>	<b>12:07</b>

### Jacques Hétu (1938-2010)

#### Complete Chamber Works for Strings

##### A Brief Survey of Jacques Hétu's Compositional Style

Melodicism, lush harmonies and instrumental discourse are all important elements in Jacques Hétu's music and his style combines expressivity and angular rhythms within very traditional musical forms. His early compositions, influenced by Bartók, Hindemith and various leading French composers, have a marked sense of polytonality and are imbued with percussive rhythms and harmonic tension. In later years his musical language matured with more open and spacious frameworks and increasingly lyrical expression. Jacques Hétu's later output was quite different from his early works, and they reflect a compositional trend of the late twentieth century away from atonality and towards a more accessible harmonic language. His core motivic, rhythmic and structural ideas, however, never changed and served as musical constants in all of his works.

##### String Quartet No. 1, Op. 19 (1972)

The *String Quartet, Op. 19* is an early work that shows the composer's emerging style, one that combines twentieth-century techniques with neo-romantic harmonic language. The quartet is in four movements, each demonstrating full compositional mastery of character and mood. The first movement, *Allegro*, begins with the opening motive of a tritone (a dissonant and "unresolvable" interval) to establish an angular musical language. All four instruments are in conversation, playing together and then apart, interrupting and changing topics frequently. The second movement, *Andante*, is a lush and beautiful elegy that builds in dynamic and intensity. The atmosphere is broken by a plaintive viola solo, after which the movement winds down to its conclusion. The third movement, *Vivace*, is a spirited and nimble scherzo that

contrasts a quirky and arrhythmic theme with interludes of glassy and furtive tremolo. A cello solo that evokes some of the more avant-garde melodies of the initial *Allegro* is at the heart of the movement. The final movement, *Allegro*, begins with a unison that mirrors the very beginning of the quartet, this time utilizing a much wider version of the tritone for striking effect. A fugue follows, which gains momentum until it is suddenly interrupted by a recollection of the theme from the second movement. After this sudden change of character, the tremolo of the third movement is brought back to break the spell, leading to the rousing conclusion of the work.

##### String Quartet No. 2, Op. 50 (1991)

Jacques Hétu's *String Quartet, Op. 50* was his second full-length quartet. Written in 1991, several decades after his first string quartet, it exhibits a distinctive stylistic departure from his early works. The quartet is more melodically conceived than his earlier compositions, and features harmonies that are primarily tonal, despite the fact that it is centered upon the motive of a semitone. The work is in three movements, with an energetic and vibrant middle movement bookended by lyrical and melancholy outer movements. The first movement, *Adagio*, is introduced by a fragile and tender theme in the first violin, which is then developed through all four voices. The cello interrupts with an intense and searching solo line, eventually leading back to the themes from the beginning. The second movement, *Vivace*, contrasts a central theme of busy tremolo and driving rhythmic figures with alternating episodes which depict lilting dance melodies and canonical pizzicato entrances. The third movement, *Andante*, was written in memory of Jacques Hétu's mother, who passed away just prior to the quartet being written. Full of hauntingly beautiful and kaleidoscopic

harmonies, the movement is openly emotional, and showcases some of Hétu's finest writing for strings.  
**Scherzo for String Quartet, Op. 54 (1992)**

The *Scherzo, Op. 54* for string quartet was composed in 1992, and showcases the talents of a mature composer in full command of his musical language and creative ideas. The beginning of the *Scherzo* functions as a prologue, introducing several themes that are used throughout the work, including a sprightly scherzo theme, a noble *Andante* featuring a lyrical cello solo (which was later used in his *Second String Quartet*) and a quotation from Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. The body of the piece is in *Rondo* form: The main theme of the movement has a true scherzo character in 6/8; fast moving and light, with sudden moments of ferocious group intensity appearing throughout. The secondary theme is more dancelike in nature, with melodic writing that features swaying rhythms in 9/8. These two themes are interspersed with two additional *Andante* sections, each one slightly different in character, and featuring a solo line above the group.

#### **Adagio and Rondo, Op. 3, No. 1a (1960)**

Jacques Hétu's first foray into string quartet writing, the *Adagio and Rondo, Op. 3*, was written upon his graduation from the Montreal Conservatory. Motivic and thematic elements from this work can be seen in all of his subsequent chamber works for strings. The *Adagio* is rather sparsely textured, lending a beautiful simplicity to the long melodic lines and gently pulsing rhythms. The *Rondo* features a hallmark of Hétu's writing at the very beginning: a declamatory rhythmic unison in all four voices. This gives way to a bouncing *Rondo* theme that is passed around all of the instruments. A short fugue and further development of the *Rondo* theme follow and the movement is brought to a close with a witty and frolicsome final statement.

#### **Sérénade for String Quartet and Flute, Op. 45 (1988)**

The *Sérénade for String Quartet and Flute* was commissioned by G. Hamilton Southam for his wife, Marion, on the occasion of their wedding anniversary. The piece was conceived as a musical commentary based on Act V, Scene I of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. It evokes the bucolic tranquility and harmony of a starry summer's night. A lyrical serenade in three movements, it begins with a brief *Prélude*, which serves to set the stage. An elaborate *Nocturne* follows, featuring calm undulating melodies over tremolo strings, depicting Shakespeare's sweet night music. The finale, a lively *Danse*, takes the same form as the *Nocturne* but recalls elements of the *Prélude* in its coda.

#### **Sextet for Strings, Op. 71 (2004)**

The *Sextet for Strings* was Jacques Hétu's final chamber work for strings. It takes the form of an introduction and six variations, showing off the rich imagination and masterful writing of Hétu's later years. The *Introduction* gradually brings in the instruments in three successive entrances, and follows this with the *Theme*, a calm and reflective melody. Each successive variation displays Hétu's creative abilities in his treatment of the *Theme*. *Variation I*, with its thick scoring and busy writing is countered by *Variation II*, a simple and elegant dance. *Variation III* features the boisterous side of the sextet, with plenty of powerful unison passages in all six voices. *Variation IV* is a reflection of the original *Theme* in character and tempo, developing the ideas further and expanding the melodic theme. In perhaps his most interesting writing in the sextet, *Variation V* begins with grave, slow moving counterpoint reminiscent of medieval chant. This builds in intensity, leading to an outburst in the first cello, which dominates the furious writing in the other voices. The tension slowly recedes, and the calm of the *Theme* takes over. *Variation VI* concludes the work with verve, combining energetic pizzicato and nimble tremolo in a whirlwind dance to the finish.

Eric Nowlin

## **Jacques Hétu (1938-2010)**

### **L'intégrale des oeuvres de chambre pour cordes**

#### **Un bref aperçu du style compositionnel de Jacques Hétu**

Traitement mélodique, harmonies luxuriantes, échanges instrumentaux : voilà autant d'éléments importants de la musique d'Hétu, son style mariant expressivité et rythmes angulaires à des formes musicales très traditionnelles. Influencées par Bartók, Hindemith et divers compositeurs français importants, ses premières compositions possèdent un sens marqué de la tonalité et sont imprégnées de rythmes percussifs et de tension harmonique. Dans les années qui ont suivi, son langage musical mûrit, à travers des cadres plus ouverts, de larges proportions, ainsi qu'une expressivité de plus en plus lyrique. La production plus tardive d'Hétu diffère grandement de ses œuvres de jeunesse et se veut le miroir d'une tendance compositionnelle de la fin du 20e siècle visant un éloignement de l'atonalité en faveur d'un langage harmonique accessible. Néanmoins, ses idées motiviques, rythmiques et structurelles n'ont jamais changé et s'inscrivent comme constantes musicales de toutes ses œuvres.

#### **Quatuor à cordes n° 1, opus 19 (1972)**

Œuvre de jeunesse montrant le style émergent du compositeur, le *Quatuor à cordes*, opus 19 combine des techniques du 20e siècle et un langage harmonique néoromantique. Il est en quatre mouvements, chacun démontrant une maîtrise compositionnelle totale des caractères et des atmosphères. Le premier mouvement, *Allegro*, s'amorce sur un motif de triton (un intervalle dissonant et « non résoluble ») qui établit un langage musical angulaire. Les quatre instruments conversent, ensemble puis séparément, s'interrompant et changeant fréquemment de sujet. Le deuxième mouvement, *Andante*, est une élégie somptueuse qui se développe en nuances et en intensité. L'atmosphère est rompue par un solo plaintif à l'alto, après lequel le mouvement se détend vers la conclusion. Le troisième mouvement, *Vivace*, est un scherzo spirituel et preste qui met en opposition un thème décalé, arythmique,

et des interludes de trémolos transparents et furtifs. Un solo de violoncelle qui évoque certaines des mélodies plus avant-gardistes du premier mouvement se niche au cœur de celui-ci. Le finale, *Allegro*, commence par un unisson, miroir du début du quatuor, une plus large version du motif du triton étant cette fois-ci privilégiée pour un effet plus saisissant. Une fugue suit, qui prend de l'ampleur jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit brusquement interrompue par une reprise du thème du deuxième mouvement. Après ce changement de caractère soudain, le trémolo du troisième revient pour rompre le sortilège, menant à une conclusion passionnée de l'œuvre.

#### **Quatuor à cordes n° 2, opus 50 (1991)**

Le *Deuxième Quatuor à cordes*, opus 50, a été écrit en 1991, plusieurs décennies après le premier et se veut une déviation stylistique distinctive par rapport aux premières œuvres d'Hétu. Le quatuor est conçu de façon plus mélodique que ses compositions antérieures et met en lumière des harmonies essentiellement tonales, en dépit du fait que l'œuvre est entièrement articulée autour du motif du demi-ton. Celle-ci, en trois mouvements, comprend un mouvement central énergique et vibrant encadré par deux mouvements externes lyriques et mélancoliques. Le premier mouvement, *Adagio*, est introduit par un thème fragile et tendre au premier violon, développé par la suite dans les quatre voix. Le violoncelle interrompt le propos avec une ligne intense et inquisitrice, qui nous ramène finalement aux thèmes du début. Le deuxième mouvement, *Vivace*, établit un contraste entre un thème central composé de trémolos fébriles et de motifs rythmiques moteurs et des épisodes comprenant des mélodies de danse animées et des entrées pizzicato en canon. Le troisième mouvement, *Andante*, a été écrit à la mémoire de la mère de Jacques Hétu, décédée peu de temps avant la composition du quatuor. Rempli d'harmonies kaléidoscopiques d'une beauté envoutante, le mouvement se veut ouvertement émotionnel et demeure l'une des pages pour cordes les plus abouties d'Hétu.

### Scherzo pour quatuor à cordes, opus 54 (1992)

Écrit en 1992, le *Scherzo*, opus 54 pour quatuor à cordes démontre le talent d'un compositeur accompli, en pleine possession de son langage musical et de ses idées créatrices. Le début du *Scherzo* sert de prologue et présente plusieurs thèmes qui seront exploités tout au long de l'œuvre, dont un thème de scherzo vif, un noble *Andante* qui comprend un solo de violoncelle lyrique (qui sera utilisé ultérieurement dans son *Deuxième Quatuor à cordes*) et une citation des *Variations Goldberg* de Bach. Le corps de la pièce est de forme rondo. Le premier thème, en 6/8, possède un véritable caractère de scherzo, rapide et léger, ponctué tout au long de moments brusques d'intensité féroce de tout le groupe. Le deuxième thème se veut plus dansant, avec une écriture mélodique qui fait la part belle à des rythmes ondulants en 9/8. Ces deux thèmes sont entrecoupés de deux autres sections *Andante*, chacune un peu différente, une ligne soliste s'élevant au-dessus de la masse.

### Adagio et rondo, opus 3 n° 1a (1960)

Première incursion de Jacques Hétu dans l'écriture pour quatuor à cordes, l'*Adagio et rondo*, opus 3 a été écrite pour conclure ses études au Conservatoire de Montréal. Des éléments motiviques et thématiques tirés de cette œuvre se retrouvent dans toutes ses œuvres ultérieures de musique de chambre pour cordes. L'*Adagio* est plutôt dépouillé, ce qui permet aux longues lignes mélodiques et aux rythmes doucement pulsés de se déployer avec une belle simplicité. Le *Rondo* présente d'entrée de jeu un signe distinctif de l'écriture d'Hétu : un unisson rythmique déclamatoire aux quatre voix. Celui-ci s'efface devant un thème de *Rondo* rebondissant que s'échangent les quatre instruments. Une courte fugue et un nouveau développement du thème du *Rondo* suivent, le mouvement s'achevant sur un énoncé final spirituel et plein d'entrain.

### Sérénade pour quatuor à cordes et flûte, opus 45 (1988)

La *Sérénade* pour quatuor à cordes et flûte est une commande de G. Hamilton Southam, en cadeau à sa

femme, Marion, pour leur anniversaire de mariage. La pièce est conçue comme un commentaire musical sur la première scène du cinquième acte du *Marchand de Venise* de Shakespeare. Elle évoque la tranquillité bucolique et l'harmonie d'une nuit d'été étoilée. En trois mouvements, cette sérénade lyrique commence par un bref *Prélude* qui donne le ton. Un *Nocturne* élaboré suit, de calmes mélodies ondoyantes se développant au-dessus de trémolos aux cordes, rappelant la douce musique nocturne de Shakespeare. Le finale, une joyeuse *Danse*, adopte la même forme que le *Nocturne*, mais rappelle des éléments du *Prélude* dans sa coda.

### Sextuor pour cordes, opus 71 (2004)

Dernière œuvre de musique de chambre pour cordes de Jacques Hétu, le *Sextuor* pour cordes est constitué d'une introduction suivie d'un thème avec six variations, mettant en valeur la richesse d'imagination et l'écriture maîtrisée des dernières années d'Hétu. L'introduction, avec l'entrée graduelle des instruments en trois étapes, est suivie du thème, une mélodie calme et songeuse. Chacune des variations démontre la créativité avec laquelle est traité le thème. La première variation, avec son instrumentation dense et son écriture chargée, est contrée par la deuxième, une danse simple et élégante. La troisième met en lumière le côté turbulent du sextuor, à travers de nombreux passages puissants à l'unisson aux six voix. La quatrième est le reflet du thème original, tant au niveau du caractère que du tempo, les idées étant développées plus avant et le thème mélodique élargi. Peut-être la plus intéressante au point de vue de l'écriture, la cinquième variation commence par un contrepoint lent et grave, rappelant les mélodies médiévales. L'intensité monte, jusqu'à un emportement du premier violoncelle, qui domine l'écriture furieuse des autres voix. La tension se résorbe doucement et le calme du thème reprend le dessus. La sixième variation conclut l'œuvre avec verve, un pizzicato énergique se mariant à un trémolo alerte dans une danse tourbillonnante nous menant vers la fin.

**Eric Nowlin**

*Traduction de Lucie Renaud*

## Jacques Hétu

French-Canadian composer Jacques Hétu is widely considered to be one of Canada's finest composers, as well as being a teacher of considerable note. Born in Trois-Rivières, Quebec, in 1938, he attended the Montreal Conservatory, where he won the school's top prize in composition. Upon graduating, he continued his studies in Paris with Henri Dutilleul and Olivier Messiaen. Jacques Hétu was for the most part a traditionalist who combined neo-Romantic lyricism with modernist techniques. He wrote prolifically for voice, solo instruments, chamber ensemble and orchestra. In 1989 he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and in 2001 he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada. Jacques Hétu died in 2010 in Saint-Hippolyte, Quebec.

## Steven Dann



Photo: Lucas Dann

Steven Dann was born in Vancouver. His foremost teacher and mentor was the late Lorand Fenyves. Upon graduation from university he was named Principal Viola of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, a position he subsequently held with the Tonhalle Orchestra in Zurich, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam, the Vancouver Symphony and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Steven Dann has collaborated as a soloist with conductors including Sir Andrew Davis, Rudolf Barshai, Jiří Bělohlávek, Sir John Elliott Gardiner, Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Vladimir Ashkenazy. Since 1990 he has been a member of the Smithsonian Chamber Players in Washington D.C. and was a founding member of the Axelrod String Quartet. He is currently violist of both the Zebra Trio (with violinist Ernst Kovacic and cellist Anssi Karttunen) and Toronto's twice GRAMMY®-nominated ARC Ensemble. Steven Dann teaches viola and chamber music at the Glenn Gould School in Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music and is the Coordinator of the chamber music programme at the Domaine Forget in Quebec. He plays a viola of Joseph Gagliano, circa 1780.

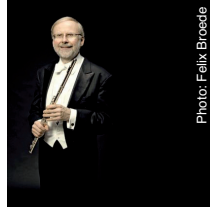
## Colin Carr



Photo: Benjamin Eelovega

Cellist Colin Carr appears throughout the world as a soloist, chamber musician, recording artist, and teacher. He has played with major orchestras worldwide, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Philharmonia, London, the Royal Philharmonic, the BBC Symphony, the orchestras of Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, Philadelphia, Montreal, and all the major orchestras of Australia and New Zealand. His significant discography includes Beethoven's complete works for cello and piano, the complete Bach *Cello Suites*, as well as unaccompanied cello works of Kodály, Britten, Crumb, and Schuller. As a member of the Golub-Kaplan-Carr Trio, he has recorded and toured extensively for twenty years. He is the winner of many prestigious awards, including First Prize at the Naumburg Competition, the Gregor Piatigorsky Memorial Award, and Second Prize at the Rostropovich International Cello Competition and the Young Concert Artists competition. In 1998 he was made a professor at the Royal Academy of Music and St John's College, Oxford created the post of Musician in Residence for him. In September 2002 he became a professor at Stony Brook University in New York. Colin Carr's cello was made by Matteo Goffriller in Venice in 1730.

## Timothy Hutchins



Principal flute of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra (OSM) since 1978, Timothy Hutchins has received international critical acclaim for his work as a concerto soloist, as a duo recitalist with his wife, pianist Janet Creaser Hutchins, and as a chamber musician. He has appeared extensively as soloist with the OSM: notably with Charles Dutoit. Timothy Hutchins has appeared as guest principal with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa, Vladimir Ashkenazy, and with Leonard Bernstein at the latter's last appearance, recording Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* at Tanglewood. As guest principal he has performed and toured with the New York Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta and Kurt Masur. He was principal flute of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra for the 2003-04 season. Timothy Hutchins is professor of flute at McGill University. Many of his students perform with leading orchestras around the world.

## New Orford String Quartet

Jonathan Crow and Andrew Wan, Violins • Eric Nowlin, Viola • Brian Manker, Cello



The New Orford String Quartet was formed in July 2009, taking its name from the great Canadian quartet, the Orford String Quartet. It gave its first concert for a sold-out audience at the Orford Arts Centre. The quartet received unanimous critical acclaim for this concert, including two Opus Awards for Concert of the Year, as well as a glowing review in the *Montreal Gazette*. In the short time since its creation the New Orford Quartet has seen astonishing success, performing throughout Canada and the United States, as well as being featured on numerous CBC concert broadcasts and recording quartets by Beethoven, Brahms, and Haydn for CBC video. The members of the New Orford String Quartet are all principal players in the Montreal and Toronto Symphony Orchestras.

The New Orford String Quartet is dedicated to promoting Canadian works, both new commissions and works from the past hundred years. In 2011 the New Orford String Quartet released its debut album of the final quartets of Schubert and Beethoven on Bridge Records to international acclaim. Described as one of the top CDs of 2011 by *La Presse* and *CBC In Concert*, it was nominated for a JUNO Award in 2012. Brian Manker plays on a cello made by Pietro Guarneri of Venice in 1729, and a bow by François Peccatte loaned by Canimex.

Jacques  
**HÉTU**  
(1938-2010)



The Canada Council  
for the Arts | Le Conseil des Arts  
du Canada

- |              |  |              |
|--------------|--|--------------|
| <b>1-4</b>   | <b>String Quartet No. 1, Op. 19</b><br>(1972)**    | <b>18:18</b> |
| <b>5-7</b>   | <b>String Quartet No. 2, Op. 50</b><br>(1991)*     | <b>18:16</b> |
| <b>8</b>     | <b>Scherzo, Op. 54 (1992)*</b>                     | <b>6:13</b>  |
| <b>9-10</b>  | <b>Adagio and Rondo, Op. 3, No. 1a</b><br>(1960)** | <b>9:09</b>  |
| <b>11-13</b> | <b>Sérénade, Op. 45 (1988)** †</b>                 | <b>10:23</b> |
| <b>14</b>    | <b>Sextet, Op. 71 (2004)* ††</b>                   | <b>12:07</b> |

**New Orford String Quartet**

**Jonathan Crow, Violin I\* and II\*\***

**Andrew Wan, Violin I\*\* and II\***

**Eric Nowlin, Viola • Brian Manker, Cello**

**Steven Dann, Viola†† • Colin Carr, Cello††**

**Timothy Hutchins, Flute†**

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

Major funding for this recording was generously supplied by the Canada Council for the Arts, Jeanne Desaulniers-Héту, Isabelle Paquet, Bernard Héту, Nicolas Desaulniers-Soucy Réjean and Anne-Marie Lizotte, Michel Senez, Laury and Roz Bakst Gross, and Peter and Margie Mendell.

Recorded at the Multimedia Music Room, Schulich School of Music, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, from 6th to 9th May, 2012.

Producer: Martha de Francisco

Engineer: Doyuen Ko • Editor: Jeremy Tusz

Series producers: Charles Barber and Raymond Bisha

Publisher: Doberman-Yppan • Booklet notes: Eric Nowlin

Cover painting: *Sans titre* (1968) by Claire Meunier



CANADIAN CLASSICS  
CLASSIQUES CANADIENS

Highly respected as an educator, Jacques Héту was also one of the most frequently performed of all contemporary Canadian composers. His earlier hallmarks of polytonality and harmonic tension were rooted in European influences, and as his work matured it became increasingly lyrical and virtuosic. The *First String Quartet* sees Héту's emerging style combine 20th-century techniques with a neo-romantic harmonic language, while the more personal *Second Quartet* concludes with a hauntingly beautiful *Andante* in memory of the composer's mother. The lyrical *Sérénade* evokes the tranquility of a starry summer's night. Héту's witty *Adagio and Rondo* was his first foray into string quartet writing, while the masterful *Sextet* was his final chamber work for strings.

Booklet notes in English  
Notice en français

**WWW.NAXOS.COM**

Playing  
Time:  
**74:25**