In order to ensure a pleasant concert experience for both performers and audience, please refrain from:

- Entering or leaving during the performance.
- Bringing food or drink into the concert hall.
- Taking flash photographs.
- Using electronic devices (please remember to turn off your cellular phone, pagers and watches that chime on the hour).

Children who are able to sit quietly during the performance are welcome to our concerts.

Tape/video recording of performances is strictly prohibited without permission of the performers!

Thank you!

Liesl Schoenberger Doty, violin
Julianne Kirk Doyle, clarinet
Marie-Élaine Gagnon, cello
Young-Ah Tak, piano
Gary Busch, opening lecture

Quatuor pour la fin du Temps (1941)  
Olivier Messiaen  
(1908–1992)

Liturgie de cristal
Vocalise, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
Abîme des oiseaux
Intermède
Louange à l’Éternité de Jésus
Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes
Fouillis d’arcs-en-ciel, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
Louange à l’Immortalité de Jésus
Preface from Messiaen’s Score:

Liturgie de cristal (Crystal liturgy)

Between three and four in the morning, the awakening of birds: a solo blackbird or nightingale improvises, surrounded by a shimmer of sound, by a halo of trills lost very high in the trees. Transpose this onto a religious plane and you have the harmonious silence of Heaven.

Vocalise, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
(Vocalise, for the Angel who announces the end of Time)

The first and third sections evoke the power of the mighty Angel, crowned with a rainbow and clothed by a cloud, who sets one foot upon the sea and one foot upon the earth. In the middle section – these are the impalpable harmonies of heaven. On the piano, gentle cascades of blue-orange chords, garlanding with their distant carillon the quasi-plainsong chanting of the violin and cello.

Abîme des oiseaux (Abyss of the birds)

Clarinet solo. The abyss is Time, with its sorrows and its weariness. The birds are opposite of time; they are our desire for light, for stars, for rainbows and joyful songs!

Intermède (Intermezzo)

A scherzo of more superficial character than the other movements but linked to them nonetheless by melodic reminiscences.

Louange à l’Éternité de Jésus
(Praise for the Eternity of Jesus)

Jesus is here considered as the Word. A long phrase for the cello, infinitely slow, magnifies with love and reverence the eternity of this powerful and gentle word, “which the years can never efface.” Majestically, the melody unfolds in a kind of tender and supreme distance. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was in God, and the Word was God.” [John 1:1]

Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes
(Dance of fury, for the seven trumpets)

Rhythmically the most characteristic piece of the set. The four instruments in unison are made to sound like gongs and trumpets (the first six trumpets of the apocalypse followed by various catastrophes, the trumpet of the seventh angel announcing the consummation of the mystery of God). The use of added values, augmented or diminished rhythms, and non-retrogradable rhythms. Music of stone, fearful granite sonorities; the irresistible movement of steel, enormous blocks of purple fury, of icy intoxication. Listen above all to the terrible fortissimo of the theme in augmentation and the changes in register of its different notes, towards the end of the piece.

Fouillis d’arcs-en-ciel, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps
(Tumult of rainbows, for the angel who announces the end of Time)

Certain passages from the second movement return. The mighty Angel appears, and above all the rainbow which crowns him (the rainbow: a symbol of peace, wisdom, and of all sounding and luminous vibrations). In my dreams, I hear recognized chords and melodies, I see known colours and forms; then, after this transitory stage, I pass beyond reality and submit in ecstasy to a dizziness, a gyratory interlocking of superhuman sounds and colours. These swords of fire, these flows of blue-orange lava, these sudden stars; this is the tumult of rainbows.

Louange à l’Immortalité de Jésus
(Praise for the Immortality of Jesus)

"A long violin solo, acting as a pendant to the cello solo of the fifth movement. Why this second eulogy? It is addressed more specifically to the second aspect of Jesus – the man Jesus – to the Word made flesh, resurrected immortally to grant us life. It is all love. Its slow ascent towards the extreme high register is the ascent of man towards his God, of the Child of God towards his Father, of the deified Being towards Paradise."