

ModernWorks!

Madeleine Shapiro, director

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Called "a dynamic new music ensemble" (The New York Times) ModernWorks! was formed in 1997 by cellist and long-time concert producer Madeleine Shapiro. The focus of the ensemble is the exploration of the wealth of recent repertoire written for strings in a variety of combinations. Though the core is a string quartet, the ensemble also performs repertoire in numerous other combinations; string duos and trios, as well as works with guitar and harp. Its ModernCelli ensemble performs music for multiple cellos and Madeleine and Mikko is a cello and accordion duo. This is an area of the contemporary repertoire which is very rich, but not being consistently explored by most ensembles.

Madeleine was the founder, and co-director of The New Music Consort for 21 years, and ModernWorks! is a continuation and expansion of her work in the field of contemporary music. It reflects her interest in performing and programming an eclectic range of new works by both established and emerging composers, and in the creation of new works. In the short time that the ensemble has been in existence, it has won critical acclaim for its New York seasons. It has also presented 18 New York or United States premieres of works by both young, emerging composers, and such diverse established composers as Sofia Gubaidulina, Kaija Saariaho, Luciano Berio, Iannis Xenakis and Bernard Rands. ModernWorks! is proud to have been the recipient of a commissioning grant from Meet the Composer to commission a duo for cello and accordion by the eminent American composer Charles Wuorinen. The work received its premiere in January, 2002. ModernWorks! takes particular pride in its work with younger, or lesser known American composers. During the 2000-01 season alone, the ensemble presented works by five younger composers on its New York series.

ModernWorks! consists of a core of some of New York City's most prominent performers of new music. The ensemble is a member of The New York Consortium for New Music and has appeared in New York on Sonic Boom 6, 8, 9 and 10. Other appearances have included two seasons at the Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse in which the ensemble was featured in a three concert series of 20th century Italian music; the American Craft Museum (2 seasons) and Context Theater. The ensemble has been heard on NPR's Performance Today and WNYC's "New Sounds."

ModernWorks! was recently in residence at New York University where it performed in the university's new Black Box theater and presented lecture demonstrations and readings of works by student composers. ModernWorks' cello quartet appeared at the International Festival of Cello Ensembles in Beauvais, France in May 2001 where it gave the European premieres of works by two younger Americans. Other recent concerts took place in Bowling Green, Ohio, New Jersey (NJ Composer's Guild), Ft. Wayne, Indiana and Ghent, Belgium.