



**Esplanade  
Presents**

# Tana Quartet Performs Philip Glass' "King Lear" (France)



27 Oct 2022, Thu, 7.30pm

Esplanade Recital Studio

# About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

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Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre. It hosts a year-round line-up of about 3,500 live performances and activities presented by Esplanade, its partners and hirers. Esplanade also brings the arts virtually to audiences in Singapore and beyond, through its diverse range of digital programmes on *Esplanade Offstage*, an all-access backstage pass to the performing arts and guide to Singapore and Asian arts and culture, with videos, podcasts, articles, quizzes and resources.

As an arts centre for everyone, Esplanade also creates opportunities for seniors, youth, children and underserved communities to experience the arts. More than 70% of the shows that take place each year at the centre are free for all to enjoy.

The centre works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities and content, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. Esplanade supports the creation of artistic content by commissioning and producing new Singapore and Asian work for the international stage. It also develops technical capabilities for the industry nationally.

Turning 20 in 2022, Esplanade marks the occasion with a year-long celebration themed *20 and Beyond: Keeping the Lights On*. In addition to the presentations of its year-long festivals, programme series, and special initiatives and events, there will also be a season of new works by Singapore and Asian artists specially commissioned for the arts centre's 20th anniversary and official opening of its newest venue, Singtel Waterfront Theatre.

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is operated by The Esplanade Co Ltd (TECL), which is a not-for-profit organisation, a registered Charity and an Institution of a Public Character. The Charity Council awarded TECL the Charity Governance Award – Special Commendation for Clarity of Strategy in 2016, and the Charity Transparency Award for four consecutive years since 2016. Esplanade is Singapore's first Dementia-Friendly Arts Venue and a certified Dementia Go-To Point, as well as a Guide-dog Friendly centre.

TECL receives funding support from Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and its Community Programmes are supported by Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.

Visit [Esplanade.com](http://Esplanade.com) for more information.

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# Programme

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## Caroline Shaw

*Entr'acte* (2017)

## Philip Glass

*String Quartet No. 9, "King Lear"* (2021)

Intermission

## Franz Schubert

*String Quartet No. 14 in D Minor, D 810,  
"Death and the Maiden"* (1826)

## Tana Quartet

Antoine Maisonhaute & Ivan Lebrun, violin

Takumi Nozawa, viola

Jeanne Maisonhaute, cello

(1hr 45mins, including 15min intermission)

## Programme Notes

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### Caroline Shaw: *Entr'acte*

*Entr'acte* was written in 2011 after hearing the Brentano Quartet play Haydn's Op. 77 No. 2—with their spare and soulful shift to the D-flat major trio in the minuet. It is structured like a minuet and trio, riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of Op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice's looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolour transition.

**Caroline Shaw**

### Philip Glass: *String Quartet No. 9, "King Lear"*

Philip Glass' exceptional collaboration with Tana Quartet resulted in the creation of *String Quartet No.9*, based on the original score *King Lear*, which was produced for a Broadway production by Sam Gold.

When he was asked to compose incidental music for a Broadway production of *King Lear* in 2019, he immediately knew he wanted to write for the string quartet: "I know how to write for string quartet. I love its range of emotion." This concert version of the play's score is his ninth work for string quartet, a medium he employs to great effect to depict the turbulence, violence and despair at the heart of Shakespeare's classic tragedy.

To capture the world of King Lear in music, Glass immersed himself in the historical background that may have influenced its conception: "I began picturing what it must have been like to see this piece for the first time in 1606. The Gunpowder Plot (a failed attempt to assassinate King James I of England) had happened only months before, in November, and the theatres were closed until the spring. If the insurrectionists had had their way, the whole government, including the king, would have all gone down. That was an astonishing event to happen in England, and it tore the country apart in many ways. The idea that part of the population would try to take down the government—it was shocking."

For the original Broadway production, Glass spent weeks observing the actors in rehearsal, absorbing the play during the day and composing in the evenings. In this concert version, the stark dramatic landscape unfolds through Glass' characteristic repetitive structures, oscillating harmonies and gently sawing rhythms, punctuated by icy textures heralding the monumental storm to come.

## **Tana Quartet**

## **Franz Schubert: *String Quartet No. 14 in D Minor, D 810, "Death and the Maiden"***

The quartet takes its name from the lied "Der Tod und das Mädchen", D 531, a setting of the poem of the same name by Matthias Claudius that Schubert wrote in 1817. The theme of the song forms the basis of the second movement of the quartet. The theme is a death knell that accompanies the song about the terror and comfort of death.

### **The Maiden:**

"Oh! leave me! Prithee, leave me! thou grisly man of bone!  
For life is sweet, is pleasant.  
Go! leave me now alone!  
Go! leave me now alone!"

### **Death:**

"Give me thy hand, oh! maiden fair to see,  
For I'm a friend, hath ne'er distress'd thee.  
Take courage now, and very soon  
Within mine arms shalt softly rest thee!"

But it is not only this theme of the quartet that recalls death. The quote from the song "makes explicit the overriding theme of the work, its bleak vision and almost unremitting foreboding", writes Andrew Clements. From the violent opening unison, the first movement runs a relentless race through terror, pain and resignation, ending with a dying D minor chord. "The struggle with

Death is the subject of the first movement, and the andante accordingly dwells on Death's words," writes Cobbett. After a scherzo movement, with a trio that provides the only lyrical respite from the depressing mood of the piece, the quartet ends with a tarantella—the traditional dance to ward off madness and death. "The finale is most definitely in the character of a dance of death; ghastly visions whirl past in the inexorable uniform rhythm of the tarantella", writes Cobbett.

So strong is the association of death with the quartet that some analysts consider it to be programmatic, rather than absolute music. "The first movement of Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* string quartet can be interpreted in a quasi-programmatic fashion, even though it is usually viewed as an abstract work," writes Deborah Kessler. Theologian Frank Ruppert sees the quartet as a musical expression of Judaeo-Christian religious myths. "This quartet, like so many of Schubert's works, is a kind of para-liturgy," he writes. Each movement is about a different episode in the mythic process of death and resurrection.

## Artist Biography

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Hailed as “impeccable players” (The Guardian), the Tana Quartet approaches music of different eras and aesthetics with equal intensity, creating a new tradition that links past and future. Tana has appeared at prestigious festivals and concert series worldwide, including Philharmonie de Paris, Barcelona’s Palau de la Musica, Vienna’s Konzerthaus, Villa Medici in Rome, Darmstadt and Wigmore Hall. The quartet has been honoured with numerous awards such as the Union Composers’ Fuga Prize, Octaves de la Musique for contemporary music, the Coup de Coeur of the Charles Clos Academy and an HSBC Award at the Festival d’Aix-en-Provence.

Since its founding in 2010, Tana has been committed to promoting contemporary music in all its diversity and seeking out collaborations with composers. The quartet has consistently acted as a champion of new works, having premiered over 250 pieces by leading composers such as Ivan Fedele, Philippe Hurel and Hèctor Parra; they have been crucial advocates for the saturist movement, working closely with Franck Bedrossian, Raphaël Cendo and Yann Robin, whose works are featured on their album *Shadows*. The quartet has released 13 albums, including Philip Glass’ complete works for string quartet, recognized by *Classica* magazine as a “best album of 2018”; and most recently, *Bleu Ébène*, featuring the complete string quartets of David Achenberg.



Tana's devotion to collaborations extends to research, including partnerships with IRCAM Paris, Grame Lyon, GMEM Marseille, ArtZoyd and Centre Henri Pousseur. The quartet co-designed hybrid electroacoustic instruments in collaboration with composer Juan Gonzalo Arroyo, a ground-breaking contribution to electronic music. Their album *Volts*, featuring new works for these instruments, was acclaimed as marking "a landmark in the history of the quartet genre" ([classiquenews.com](http://classiquenews.com)).

Dedicated to education, the Tana Quartet is regularly invited to give masterclasses at institutions such as the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris, University of California Berkeley and Shanghai Conservatory. In 2018 they co-founded ARCO, an annual contemporary music academy for young composers and performers, in partnership with the Salzburg Mozarteum, GMEM, Ensemble Multilatérale and Les Métaboles.

Tana believes in extending and equalising the reach of the arts. The quartet has designed two outreach programmes to deliver engaging musical experiences to new audiences: Music Far and Wide brings the quartet into atypical venues, from supermarkets to hospitals; and One-Day Orchestra gives participants of all ages the opportunity to immerse themselves in the creative process.

The Tana Quartet is composed of:

- **Antoine Maisonhaute**                      Founding Violinist
- **Ivan Lebrun**                                      Violinist
- **Julie Michael**                                      Violist ^
- **Jeanne Maisonhaute**                      Cellist

^ *Violist Julie Michael will be replaced by Takumi Nozawa for this concert.*



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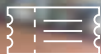
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activities took place at Esplanade.

Ticketed



**412**

Non-Ticketed



**864**

**223,399**



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Ticketed

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Non-Ticketed

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We believe that everyone should be able to experience the joy of the arts, including children, youth, seniors, migrant workers and individuals with special needs. Our community engagement activities bring the arts to those in need.



**185**

Activities

**4,357**

Participants

\*Figures for Esplanade's activities from Apr 2020 to Mar 2021.

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Esplanade–Theatres on the Bay is a charity, a not-for-profit organisation and Singapore’s national performing arts centre. We seek to entertain, engage, educate and inspire through the arts.

In 2022, we mark our 20th anniversary of being an arts centre for everyone. We thank everyone who has been a part of our journey. You have helped us bring joy, inspiration and positive impact to Singaporeans from all walks of life.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes especially to our Donors and Sponsors, for their steadfast belief in our mission and for generously supporting us.

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We believe that an experience with the arts is special and that with your generous support, more people will get a chance to enjoy the arts. Join us in sharing the joy of the arts and help us reach more communities in need.



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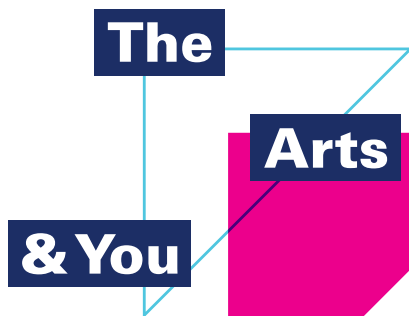
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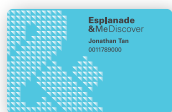
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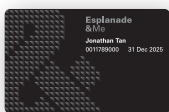
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