

Homage Series No. 3

Marie Décary and Élisabeth Éudes-Pascal



ANA

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Commissioned by the Société de musique  
contemporaine du Québec in keeping with  
the Homage Series to composer Ana Sokolović.

**Ana**

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*I do not speak of my own dreams in my music;  
my job is to build dreams for the listener.*

**Ana Sokolović, 2006**



# ANA SOKOLOVIĆ

## Childhood in the White City

Born in Belgrade in 1968, Ana Sokolović remembers a happy childhood, full of love, security, and art. From the age of 4, she took ballet classes, where, drawn to the piano in the rehearsal hall, the youngster composed her first work—a “Chinese” duet on the black keys. At school, Ana learned to sing with schoolmates and even found herself playing the drum for the raising of the flag on holidays. Her piano and drama teachers took special note of her: one encouraged her to pursue composition while the other fostered her artistic sensibilities with games that stimulated the imagination. As a teenager, Ana composed music for her plays, including *Pepeljuga ide na žur* (*Cinderella goes to the party*), which earned her a national prize for children’s stage music.

## Three Universities, Two Continents

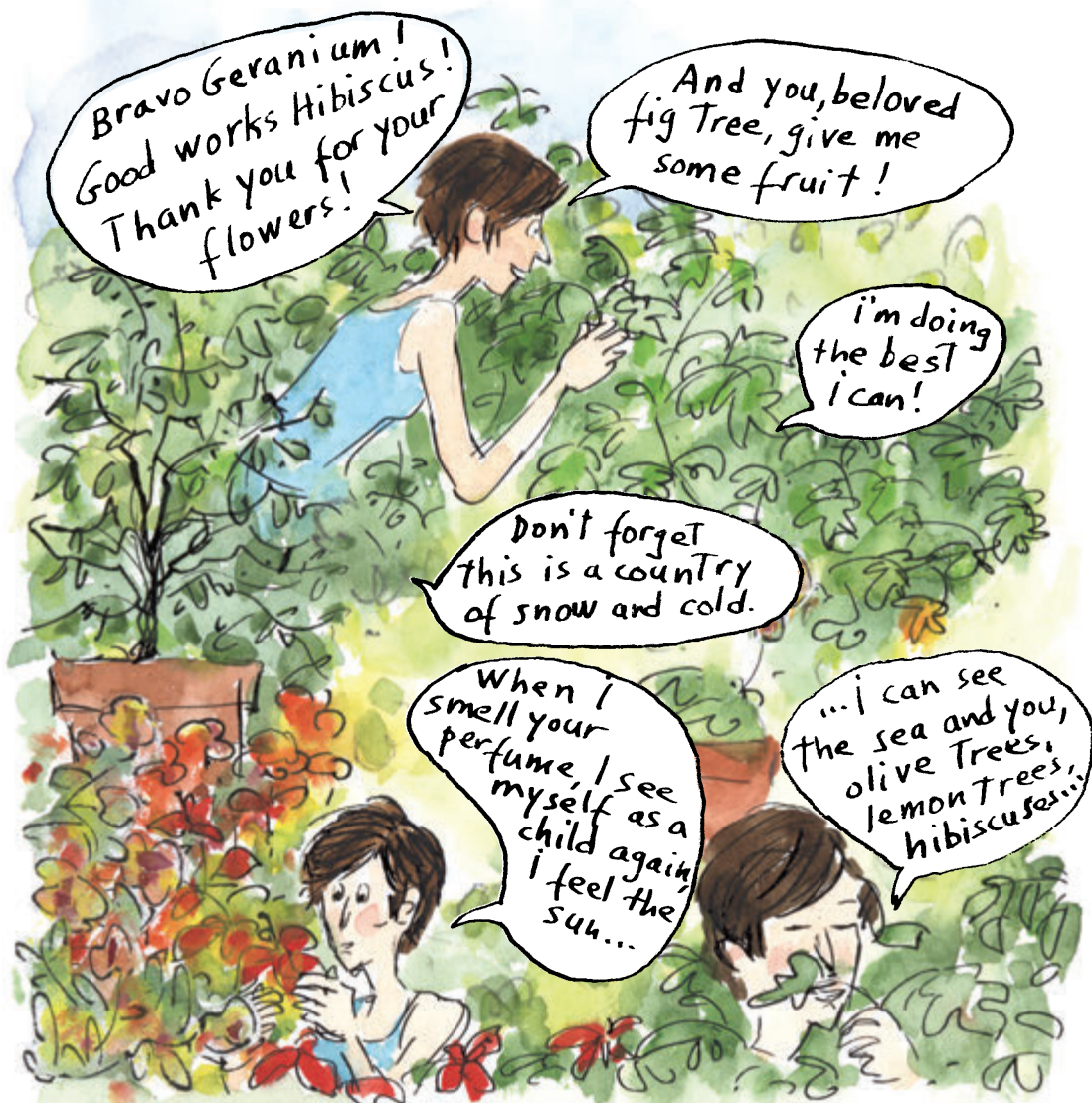
As a young woman, Sokolović completed a bachelor’s degree in composition at the University of Novi Sad, with Dušan Radić, who encouraged her to value roots and traditions. Further study at the University of Belgrade with Zoran Erić taught her the value of structured thinking. As a student, Ana also taught at a college, but the unstable political situation in Yugoslavia forced her to leave the country. On July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1992, she arrived in Montreal, and the following year began a master’s degree in composition at the Université de Montréal with José Evangelista. Straight away, Evangelista asked her to identify her musical language. Surprised by this approach, Ana felt liberated by her teacher’s personal approach. She also met her husband Jean Lesage at this time, with whom she later had two children.

## A Flourishing Career

In 1995, Ana Sokolović made her professional Montreal debut. Chosen to take part in the ECM+ *Atelier et Concert* (today known as *Projet Génération*), her work was also performed for the first time by the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec (*Ambient V*). Choreographer Lynda Gaudeault also asked her to write music for her show, *Anatomie*. Sokolović’s collaborations with the SMCQ and ECM+ continued with various commissions: *Jeu des portraits et Bouba* (SMCQ), *Cinq locomotives et quelques animaux*, *Géométrie sentimentale* et *Pesma* (ECM+). The latter was quickly reprised by Toronto’s Esprit Orchestra which later led to a number of collaborative efforts with Ontario ensembles such as the Queen of Puddings Music Theatre (which, notably, took her opera *The Midnight Court* to the Royal Opera House in London in 2006), Soundstreams, Arraymusic, CBC Toronto and others. Over the years, commissions and awards (including three SOCANs for young composers) multiplied. Today the composer counts over forty works to her credit, including stage music, operas, and works for orchestra, voice and chamber ensembles. A first CD devoted entirely to her music was recorded by ECM+ in 2006.

Composition teacher at the Université de Montréal’s music faculty since 2007, Ana Sokolović has carved out a choice spot for herself on the Canadian cultural scene since her arrival in this country twenty years ago. As irrefutable proof of the esteem in which she is held by her adopted nation, Canadian artists and organizations of every stripe have responded with unparalleled enthusiasm to the SMCQ’s call to recognize her talent through its 2011-2012 Homage Series. It’s an honour the composer has amply returned, by stirring our hearts and ears more than ever with her invigorating presence.

A SUMMER EVENING IN ANA SOKOLOVIĆ'S TINY BACKYARD IN MONTREAL; THE TIME WHEN IT IS POSSIBLE TO CHIT CHAT WITH PLANTS AND FLOWERS...



ANA WAS BORN IN BELGRADE, IN A COUNTRY THAT USED TO BE CALLED YUGOSLAVIA, BUT IS NOW KNOWN AS SERBIA



ANA SPENDS HER SUMMERS BY THE ADRIATIC SEA, OPPOSITE ITALY. TWO MONTHS OF HOLIDAYS SPENT SWIMMING, RUNNING ON THE ROCKS, HAVING FUN AND DAYDREAMING. EVERY YEAR, SHE IS ANXIOUS TO SEE HER FRIEND NANCY AGAIN, WHO COMES ALL THE WAY FROM CANADA WHERE HER PARENTS HAVE



Wow! is that what you wear in Montreal?

Uh... Yeah!

When I am grown up, I want to be an artist!

An artist! Umetnica! Me too!

Cross my heart!

I did not know yet that I'd become a composer!

But I knew I wanted to spend my life playing like a kid. Playing and inventing stories...