



MEDIA RELEASE

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Live music returns to Studio Z with Zeitgeist's *Playing it Close to Home* concert featuring Michelle Kinney

Zeitgeist is set to kick off its 2021-2022 season and mark the return of live music at Studio Z with a celebration of the musical creativity found right here in our own backyard. Zeitgeist's 2021 *Playing it Close to Home* concert features winning songs from the annual Eric Stokes Song Contest plus new music created by local composer Michelle Kinney.

Concerts will take place Sept. 10-11 at Studio Z, Zeitgeist's performance space in Lowertown Saint Paul. Seating is limited to allow for social distancing. Masks will be required and attendees must provide proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test result from the previous 72 hours.

The **Eric Stokes Song Contest** is sponsored by Zeitgeist in memory of late composer Eric Stokes; the contest was designed to encourage and celebrate amateur composers throughout the Twin Cities. *Playing it Close to Home* will feature winning songs by **Ilan Blanck** and **Julie Sweet** in the adult category, and **Ellie Gold** in the youth category.

Michelle Kinney's career began in Minneapolis, MN, when she returned home after receiving a BA in music from Northwestern University. During this early phase in her career, she was recognized and frequently funded as a composer & cellist, collaborating with Twin Cities choreographers (Laurie Van Wieren), filmmakers (Chris Sullivan, Chicago) and theater artists (Michael Sommers), in addition to composing for her own new music ensembles (IMP ORK, Aphid Bloodbath Consort). In 1989, she moved to New York City to pursue an MA in Performance Studies at New York University. Michelle lived in NYC for 13 years, recording and touring Europe and the US with several of her mentors; bridging musical genres and scenes, from art music (Henry Threadgill, Butch Morris, Myra Melford), to pop (Sheryl Crow, Natalie Merchant, Lou Reed); and composing for

dance (Cyrus Khambatta), film (Debra Dickson) and theater (Richard Schechner).

Michelle returned to the Twin Cities in 2002, to raise her young family. In addition to again becoming very actively engaged in the community as a composer and performer, Michelle is the Musician in Residence for the Dance Program within the University of Minnesota's Theater Arts and Dance Department. In this perfect "day job" for a musician/composer, Michelle improvises compositions in daily dance classes, with her cello played through a looping device. Each day Michelle spends hours reading bodies in motion as if they were sheet music, spontaneously creating and layering multiple cello parts, starting from a rhythmic foundation and building harmony, texture and melodic phrasing.

Zeitgeist: Playing it Close to Home

Sept. 10-11, 7:30 p.m.

Studio Z: 275 East Fourth Street, Suite 200, St. Paul

Tickets: \$15 / \$10 students & seniors

Seating is limited to allow for social distancing. Reserve tickets in advance at zeitgeistnewmusic.org.

About Zeitgeist:

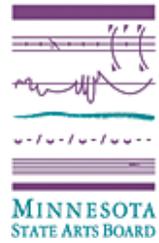
Founded in 1977, Zeitgeist is a new music chamber ensemble consisting of two percussion, piano and woodwinds, and is one of the oldest and most successful new music groups in the country. Based in St. Paul, Minn., the group presents an annual concert series and delivers a wide variety of community-based performance programs for residents of the Twin Cities and the surrounding areas. Zeitgeist's mission is to bring newly created music to life with performances that engage and stimulate. Members are: Heather Barringer, percussion; Patti Cudd, percussion; Pat O'Keefe, woodwinds; Nicola Melville, piano.

Zeitgeist is supported by the The City of St. Paul's Cultural STAR Program, The Amphion Foundation, The Knight Foundation, The Lowertown Future Fund, the Target Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, the Albrecht Family Foundation, the Aaron Copland Fund, The Mandel Family Foundation, and the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature.

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