

# PuSh International Performing Arts Festival

January 17–February 3, 2019 | [pushfestival.ca](http://pushfestival.ca)

## Introduction for patrons with sight loss

### **MUTED** by MONICA GERMINO ( from the USA & the NETHERLANDS)

This piece of music was written in response to violinist Monica Germino's news that she would have to protect her hearing by stopping or adapting how she played the violin. Four composers joined forces to co-compose a work that is designed for small audiences of up to 50 people at a time. All of the music is under 70 decibels, and at times the performance transports the audience to the very thresholds of audibility.

In **MUTED**, Monica Germino uses a number of instruments as well as her voice. Along with several music stands in different positions, most of the instruments are onstage when the audience arrives. Some are on tables, some are on stands close to the floor. The instruments she uses are:

- A J. B. Ceruti violin from Cremona (built in 1802) on permanent loan from the Elise Mathilde Foundation  
This is a classical violin that Monica plays with mutes. Mutes – also known as sourdines – are pieces of wood, metal, or other material. They attach over the strings on the bridge of the violin and can alter the sound of the violin in countless ways.
- Two rare [frame violins](#), also known as mute violins, with a delicate, surprisingly overtone-rich sound (built circa 1870 and 1970)  
Frame violins are violins without a sound box. They have the outlines of a classical violin but no front or back creating a box. Her 1970 version is white, not wooden.
- A blue violin that looks like a regular violin but is electric blue in colour.  
Monica plays it with white lace gloves by tapping the strings quietly.
- The new whisperviolin, which was made in 2018, by Bas Maas and Marcel Wanders  
This new instrument was invented especially for Monica. It is inspired by the seventeenth-century 'pocket violin:' a violin with a narrower sound box, then used by dance masters. Instead of the traditional scroll found on normal violins, the whisperviolin has a finger, as if to say: shhh. It is the same length as a regular violin but has a slender body. The face of the instrument has ornate decorative patterns that resemble adapted Moroccan patterns.  
It is played with a whisperbow made of carbon fibre that produces a wispy, delicate sound

The seating arrangement is semi-circles of about 50 chairs facing the centre of the room. At the centre of the room is a small tower of lights which glows and changes colour throughout the performance. Designed by Floriaan Ganzevoort, subtle changes to the lighting are meant to help focus the ear on the music and not distract the eye.

Monica enters the performance playing a few notes and walking. She looks and smiles at the audience in a welcoming way while playing and moving to a music stand, then starts the beginning of the piece without applause. Sometimes during the performance she walks past the audience members, occasionally playing very very quietly close to one audience member's ears. As the concert comes to a close, the violinist sings and plays while she walks out of the hall. In silence at the end, there is a sudden change to the lighting that surprises the audience.

January 28 at 8PM, January 29 & 30th at 7PM and 9PM | at the ANNEX | Price: \$39

**For more information on shows that are accessible to people with vision loss, download the info sheet by clicking [here](#) (for the PDF version) and [here](#) (for the DOC version)**

For full details and to discuss accessibility needs please contact:

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