

*Willem van Merwijk* (Bemmel, The Netherlands, 1960) is co-founder of the Aurelia Saxophone Quartet and has been playing the baritone saxophone in this group from 1982 till 2014. He has given concerts all over the world thus promoting both his instrument and the saxophone quartet. The Quartet recorded a great number of CD's, setting new standards for the ensemble. One of the prizes awarded to the Quartet was an Edison for their Gershwin/Moussorgsky album.

In 2014, after having performed over 30 years with the Quartet, van Merwijk decided to leave the group, his goodbye concerts being two concerts with Branford Marsalis in the spring of 2014.

Mr. Van Merwijk is a member of the Netherlands Wind Ensemble since 1990 and regularly performing, composing and arranging for this group. Amongst other things he performed over 25 times at the group's famous annual New Year's Concert in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Big Hall.

At H.M. Queen Beatrix's State Visit to Thailand in 2003 he appeared as a soloist with the group for H.M. King Bhumibol of Thailand and the Royal Families of Thailand and the Netherlands.

He also performed with a variety of symphony orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Rotterdam Philharmonic.

Mr. van Merwijk is very passionate about teaching. He is currently professor of saxophone methodics and saxophone at the Amsterdam Conservatorium and professor of arranging at the HKU Utrecht.

Mr. van Merwijk was co-founder of the 'Winds Of Change' (2007), the Wind Ensemble of Bosnia and Herzegovina and artistic director of this ensemble.

*Guillermo Lago* (1960) is musician Willem van Merwijk's composing alter ego. The first pieces Lago wrote were two tangos for the concert program 'Tangón'. In this program the Aurelia Saxophone Quartet investigated together with Ville Hiltula (bandoneon) and Juan Pablo Dobal (piano) how the concert-tango is developing after the death of its inventor Astor Piazzolla. In the process of finding composers and repertoire for this tour van Merwijk discovered that he himself had very distinct musical ideas and decided to write two pieces (Pequeñitos/Tonto del Pueblo) under a Spanish pseudonym: Guillermo Lago. When continuing to compose he decided to stick to this name, because it suited his music perfectly.

In the course of a few years Lago has written over 50 compositions of which about a fourth has been recorded on CD/DVD. Pieces dedicated to musicians such as pianist Ivo Janssen, saxophonists Arno Bornkamp and Ties Mellema, tromboneplayers Jörgen van Rijen, Brandt Attema and André Heuvelman and to groups such as the Netherlands Wind Ensemble, the Aurelia & Amstel Saxophone Quartets, the National Dutch Youth Choir, the New Trombone Collective, JONG Ensemble, Winds of Change and the EnAccord String Quartet.

In 2011 Lago was invited to write the yearly composition at National Memorial Day in the Netherlands that was performed before an audience including HRH Queen Beatrix and broadcasted live on national TV and radio.

In 2013 Lago wrote 'l'Entrata del Re' for the coronation of H.M. King Willem Alexander of the Netherlands, live broadcasted and watched by over 50 million viewers world-wide.

Van Merwijk/Lago's work is being performed all over the world. Recent work for wind orchestra (dedicated and commissioned by the Marine's Band of the Royal Dutch Navy), the series 'Ciudades' for saxophone quartet and his pieces for trombone rank among the most performed of his works and the number of commissions is constantly growing, in the Netherlands as well as abroad.

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