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New Music Concerts

2002-2003 Season Programme Notes

**CARTE BLANCHE À PHILLIPE MANOURY • GENERATION 2002 • PIERRE BOULEZ
WITHIN/ABOVE/BEYOND/ENACTMENTS • A GLIMPSE AT LITHUANIA
OCCIDENT~ORIENT • PIONEERS! O PIONEERS! • THE UNKNOWN CRUMB**

32nd season | 258th event

Sunday November 3, 2002, 8 pm at The Music Gallery

Carte Blanche à Philippe Manoury

**with soloists Robert Aitken, Jim Gardiner and Trevor Tureski
Illuminating Introduction with Philippe Manoury at 7:15**

Philippe Manoury - Jupiter** (1987) (37')
flute and electronics

Philippe Manoury (France, 1952) - Ultima** (12')
clarinet (bass clar); cello and piano

Yan Maresz (Monaco/France 1966) - Metallics** (1995) (15')
trumpet and electronics

Zack Settel (USA, 1957) - Japtax (1996) (20')
percussion solo with live computer-based electronics

** *Canadian premiere*

Mr. Manoury's participation is supported by
the **Consulat Général de France à Toronto** and the
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Carte Blanche à Phillippe Manoury features some of Toronto's most outstanding musicians: Robert Aitken (Jupiter); Jim Gardiner (Metallics) and Trevor Tureski (Japtax). The players for Ultima are Max Christie (clarinet), David Hetherington (cello) and David Swan (piano). Philippe Manoury is the former director of SONVS, the Département d'électroacoustique et d'Informatique Musicales du Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Lyon, and an associate of IRCAM (L'Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique) in Paris.

Born in 1952, Manoury studied composition at the École Normale de Musique, and subsequently at the Paris Conservatoire (1974-78). He was responsible for pedagogy with the Ensemble Intercontemporain (1984), Composer in Residence with l'Orchestre de Paris (1996-99), and Director of the European Academy of the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence (1998-2000). His compositions have been frequently conducted by Pierre Boulez, Peter Eötvös, Kent Nagano, David Robertson, and performed by the symphony orchestras of Paris, Cleveland, Chicago and the Concertgebouw. Recently his opera *K* was performed by the Opéra Bastille in Paris.

Manoury's captivating work confirms him as one of the most gifted composers of his generation, and above all one who has successfully assimilated the teachings of his elders in a highly personal way.

With *Jupiter*, and above all with *Pluton*, *Neptune* and *Enecho* for instruments and live electronics, Manoury exploited the enormous flexibility afforded by computer technology: prerecorded passages in the solo instrumental parts are subsequently recognized by the computer which in turn activates a complementary response. The enrichment provided by this technique allows for a new distribution of sound in space, parallel to the numerous transformations which take place in the solo part, and stimulated the development of Manoury's concept of 'virtual scores'.

Jupiter* and *Ultima

programme notes by Philippe Manoury

The composer and the machine

Jupiter is the first of a cycle which aims at exploring the interaction between instruments and a digital synthesis system that treats the sound in real time. How does this work? First, the machine is becoming more and more like a human being (a musician, in this case). In other words, the machine listens, waits for an event, and reacts when the said event occurs. It is, of course, a simulation but I do believe that simulation, much like imagination, is a component of art. The machine accomplishes, in part, what a conductor playing with a soloist would. To sum it up, the machine is smarter because it recognizes and follows the proposed discourse (provided that it has been previously keyed-in); it adapts, according to the different criteria the composer has previously established. It was important to me that this piece be focused on the flutist's playing, and performed without any external intervention. Thus, the flutist is triggering all elements from the synthetic or treated part. Any other outside operation will have a corrective function - such as fixing eventual mistakes - or attempting to distribute the sound equally among the four speakers. (Text from 1987)

The work and its environment

Jupiter explores this environment and attempts to initiate as many consequences as possible. As it takes place in time, the relationship between the instrument and the machine becomes more tightly knit:

From the sound of the flute: the sound of the flute is recognized and sent instantly into different "modules" that either maintain its time (the reverberation being held as long as desired) or carry it through space (where harmonics alter the pitch without affecting the length) to form harmonico-polyphonic configurations or, finally, to transform the tone itself. With these three possibilities and their numerous combinations, one can play with length, pitch and tone. Thus, by tripling the sound of the flute, I extrapolate until it becomes unrecognizable, weaving new links between familiar sounds and unfamiliar sounds in a new compositional dialectic.

From an instrumental score: I created these programs to allow the detection of rhythmic sequences played by the flutist. Once memorized, these sequences are placed at each end of another sequence whose role is to transform the first rhythm's sequence into small quantities, until it becomes identical to the second one

(interpolation). This rhythmic score will then serve as a support to a “synthesis score” which will experiment with the same principle on different scales (compressed and dilated in a succession of interpolations).

Synthetic accompaniment: a synthetic score weaves chords, counterpoint and arpeggios around the flute part. Here, the instrument controls the beginning and the end of each synthetic intervention but not its content. These sections stand as commentaries about statements where the flute feeds the interpolation programs described above.

Variation of formants: if the flute is not otherwise interacting with the evolution of the synthetic elements, it can control the attack and decay of the events, as well as their internal evolution. A spectral envelope (which allows the amplitude of parts of the harmonic spectrums to be modified) reacting to the flutist’s performance will highlight the synthetic sounds, from low to high pitches, following the position of the notes in the overtone series. This way, total control of time, spectrum and modulation of a synthetic score can be achieved by the interpreter.

I thank Miller Puckette, Marc Battier, Olivier Koechlin, Cort Lippe and Thierry Lancino for their help and support. *Jupiter* is dedicated to the memory of Lawrence M. Beauregard, who passed away prematurely, and was the instigator of this project.

Ultima

Ultima and *Jupiter* belong to the chamber music repertoire. *Ultima* has more of a classical nature, and is based on the difficulties of communications between three instruments which, ultimately, become completely independent from each other. It is the antithesis of *Jupiter*, which is almost completely focused on the sounds of the flute and their transformation, prolongation and development by the computer.

Zack Settel was born in 1957 and raised in the New York area. He received a BFA in Music Composition from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), where he studied composition with Leonard Stein, Morton Subotnick, Mel Powell, and Morton Feldman. Keenly interested in the use of technology in music production/performance, Settel moved to Paris in 1986, with a Fulbright Scholarship for computer music research and composition at the Institute for Research and the Coordination of Acoustics and Music (IRCAM) headed by Pierre Boulez. After a two-year composing residency there, Settel remained at IRCAM until 1995, working full-time in the music production and music research groups. In 1997 Settel returned to North America, where he was a professor at McGill University in Canada for two years, chairing the Music Technology area, and teaching courses and graduate seminars in computer music. He also was a visiting professor of composition at the University of Montreal in 2002. He now composes full-time.

Much of Settel’s music includes the use of advanced live interactive electroacoustic systems (“audio rocket science”). He has composed chamber works, studio works, as well as music for film, video, television, theater, dance, and opera. His music is published by Editions Ambrosio (Paris), recorded on the CENTAUR, ICMA, MIT Press, and Empreints Digitales labels, and is performed regularly in North/South America and in Europe and Asia. Settel has composed music for Television and Film, and has worked with various performing ensembles including the Ensemble Intercontemporain (Paris), Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (Montréal), Zeitgeist (Minneapolis), the California Ear Unit (Los Angeles), and Chants Libres (Montréal).

Settel is also a founding partner, and head artistic consultant of Zeep.com, developers of music production software for surround sound and audio post production. Since 1996, Settel, with Zeep, has been involved in pioneering work for the development of surround-sound music tools.

Japtax for Prepared Kettledrum
programme note by Zack Settel

Japtax is a work for solo percussionist, playing an electronically prepared kettledrum. The electronics are used to expand the timbral range of the instrument, increasing the number of possible transients and resonances. Also, the electronics provide additional “ensemble voices” in the musical structure, including other percussion and spoken text. There is no direct playback of prerecorded material, rather, all sounds are played and/or triggered by the performer. Finally, the underlying idea for the piece, “an ensemble controlled by one player”, is inspired by John Cage’s work in 1946-48 for his Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano. *Japtax* was premiered by New Music Concerts’ principal percussionist Trevor Tureski at the Bang/Klang Festival in Montreal in 1996. This work was revised in 2002.

Yan Maresz was born in Monaco in 1966 and began his studies in piano and percussion at l’Académie de Monaco. He discovered Jazz at an early age and taught himself guitar. In 1983, he became the first and only student of guitarist John McLaughlin, and after 1989, his principal orchestrator and arranger. While studying jazz at Berklee College of Music in Boston from 1984 to 1986 he became increasingly interested in writing. He enrolled in composition at the Juilliard School of New York in 1986 with a scholarship from the Fondation Princesse Grace de Monaco. He graduated in 1992 as a student of composer David Diamond.

In 1993 he left America to study at IRCAM in Paris, where his principal instructor was Tristan Murail. While there he wrote *Metallics* (1995) for trumpet solo and real-time electronics, a selected work of the 1997 International Rostrum of Composers. His commissions include *Parmi les étoiles fixes...* (1991), for l’Orchestre de Paris led by Semyon Bychkov, *Mosaïques* (1992) and *Séphire* (1997), for l’Orchestre de Cannes under Philippe Bender, *Zigzag Etudes* for orchestra (1998), *Entrelacs* (1998) for l’Ensemble Intercontemporain, *Festin* (1999) for the Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, *Eclipse* (1999) for the London Sinfonietta, and, with choreographer François Raffinot, *Al segno* (2000) with les Ballets de Monte-Carlo at IRCAM. His works are published by Editions Durand.

Metallics for trumpet and electronics
programme note by Yan Maresz

Metallics for trumpet solo and electronics utilizes music software developed at IRCAM and the MAX program as a basis for all the electronic events in real time: synthesis by filters, treatments, spatialization and direct-to-disk release of sounds through a Macintosh computer.

The structure of the work is devoted to the analysis of various silencing devices used by the trumpet: cup mute, straight mute, harmon and whisper. After analysis of the specific characteristics of each such silencing device, I tried to recreate the transformation which they operate on the trumpet while applying to the instrument in real time the spectral envelopes of each of these mutes by filtering. The trumpet is particularly well suited to these transformations, due to its frequent use of mutes which mimic these acoustic processes. I thus could simulate these various mutes on the instrument and, in addition, use them in the trumpet part; I also drew from it the formal basis around which the part is articulated: gradations between softer and louder mutes and contrasts between them, parenthesized with moments of ordinary trumpet playing (in a gradually more frenzied style) while also filtering the formants of these sounds. Time delays, harmonizations, additional filtering, sampling and spatialization constitute the remainder of the real time processing.

For this piece, IRCAM developed two devices allowing a greater interactivity between the instrument and the computer: a micro sensor located in the mouthpiece of the instrument which, through a very precise analysis of the input signal, makes it possible to follow pitch and amplitude; as well as a small switch attached to the

instrument which can be manipulated by the soloist. The switch triggers sounds derived from samples of trumpets, various brass instruments and some metal percussion sounds which are treated with the program SVP (expansions, compressions, filterings, cross-syntheses), the program Additive (extraction of the noise aspects of a sound) and are then sequenced with the ProTools program. In the version with tape heard tonight, most of the electronic sounds coming from the real time processing were recovered, but the specifically interactive treatments such as the spatialization of the trumpet as well as the processes of filtering on the instrument described previously are missing. However, a simulation of the responses of these various mutes was carried out using trumpet samples.

Translations by Francine Labelle and Daniel Foley

32nd season | 259th event

Thursday November 14, 2002, 8 pm at The Music Gallery

L'Ensemble contemporain de Montréal

Véronique Lacroix, artistic director

Illuminating Introduction with the composers at 7:15

Louis Dufort (Canada 1970) - Déflagration (2002)

Nicole Lizée (Canada 1975) - Left Brain/Right Brain (2002)

Marci Rabe (Canada 1978) - and amber cinders remain (2002)

Patrick Saint-Denis (Canada 1975)

Berceuse pour enfants perdus d'avance au reste du monde (2002)

Presented with the generous support of

Bureau du Québec à Toronto

New works written especially for this renowned ensemble's Canadian tour, by:

Louis Dufort (Quebec)

From l'Université de Montréal on (BA, 1997), through the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal (First Prize with high distinction, 1999), Louis Dufort has developed a fundamentally expressionistic personal style, often dramatically striving toward catharsis, as in *Pointe-aux-Trembles* (1996), *Transit* (1998) and *Zénith* (1999), or as in *Lucie* (1998) and *Consommation* (1999), where the performer is transformed into an actual character, furthering the narrative. *Décap* (2000), which received an Honorary Mention at the Prix Ars Electronica, marked the final point of this period of intense representational drama; in its stead came a more abstract expressivity as in *Spiel* (for flute, 2001), *Accident* (2001) and *Intonarumori* ("Harbour Symphony", 2002). Louis Dufort's works are performed in Montréal as well as in Europe. His CD *Connexion*, released on the label Empreintes Digitales in 2001, received nominations at both the ADISQ and the Prix Opus. *Vulvatron 2000* was awarded First Prize in ACREQ's Electro-Video Clip Competition (1996), and *Concept 2018957* received a First Prize at the SOCAN Awards (1997).

In addition, the composer participated in the *Symphony of the Millennium* (2000). Since 2000, he has collaborated regularly with modern dance choreographers, such as Marie Chouinard and Jocelyne Montpetit. A member of the Artistic Committees of both ACREQ and SMCQ, he teaches computer-assisted music techniques at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal.

Déflagration (2002)

programme note by Louis Dufort

“Déflagration” (Explosion): Be it the simple lighting of a match, the blast of a firearm or the detonation of an atomic bomb, violent combustion of matter remains a fascinating phenomenon of physics and sound.

It evokes memories of my childhood, when hours spent detonating rolls of explosive caps with a hammer would cause buzzing and ringing in my ears; I also discovered at that time the bleak reality of destruction, as I perused my father’s illustrated works on the Second World War.

With this work, I attempt on the one hand to represent the physical aspects of the explosion of matter: the tension and sudden release of particles into air, comparable to the production of sound. In addition, I cast a critical eye upon the present, at a time when human flesh itself has come to serve as detonator of a people.

This piece is part of a compositional approach in which traditional instrument fabrication is transformed by way of virtual additions. Halfway between instrument making and composition, this approach basically makes use of the resulting new acoustic material to create a work of music.

Nicole Lizée (Saskatchewan/Quebec)

In 1995, Nicole Lizée completed a Bachelor of Music degree from Brandon University with a double major in piano and composition. She studied piano with David Rogosin and Robert Richardson, composition with Patrick Carrabré, and participated in several master classes with Randolph Peters and Peter Paul Kaprowski. In 2001, she received a Master of Music degree in composition from McGill University in Montreal, where she studied with Denys Bouliane and John Rea. Her Masters thesis consisted of a work for large ensemble and solo turntablist that featured contemporary scratch DJ techniques fully notated and integrated into a concert music setting. The work was included in a promotional video/documentary for new turntable music in Montreal.

Nicole was recently awarded the 2002 Canada Council for the Arts Robert Fleming Prize and received a Canada Council grant to compose three works for DJ and electronics in combination with various acoustic ensembles. Other upcoming projects include a commission for Bradyworks in Montreal as well as number of computer based music projects.

Left Brain/Right Brain (2002)

programme note by Nicole Lizée

Left Brain/Right Brain is inspired by the images and sounds associated with certain films in the science-fiction genre; particularly those from the 1950s and 1960s, when sci-fi was evolving and flourishing. Many of the films in this period used the brain as a visual and conceptual element and incorporate images of the brain either as a tool or specimen (brains sitting in jars in a lab) or in reference to a character and his own brain (eg. mad scientist, evil genius stealing brains to use in his experiments). The science-fiction soundtrack was becoming an integral part of the film and was evolving as quickly as the films themselves. To accentuate these new visual and conceptual aspects of sci-fi, composers were introducing new sonorities into their work. Lev Theramin, Maurice Martenot, Laurens Hammond, and Robert Moog had been demonstrating their new groundbreaking instruments since the late 1920s and these instruments were now starting to be heard and/or simulated in science-fiction soundtracks. Composers began to further process their sounds using effects such as reverb, delay, and filters. The sounds were intended to evoke those of otherworldly, more advanced beings and the machines that were their tools. Composers were presented with the challenge of emulating sounds that

were not of this earth; the combination of acoustic instruments simulating electronic instruments and actual electronic instruments coupled with time based effect processing was an effective way of recreating this world. Echo effects could imply the massive distance that the being had travelled. Phasing and flanging mimicked the sound of a ray gun or laser. All of these innovative sonorities developed into a distinct music genre and became what is now known as the “quintessential 1960s Space Age sound”.

This work is an ode to that brain in a jar.

Marci Rabe (Ontario/British Columbia)

Marci Rabe is pursuing a M.Mus. from the University of Victoria after having received a B.Mus., Honours Composition from Wilfrid Laurier University. Currently, Marci is studying composition with Christopher Butterfield, and has previously studied with Glenn Buhr, Linda C. Smith, and Peter Hatch. Recent projects include participating in the Arraymusic Young Composer’s Workshop and a work presented in a Continuum Contemporary Music Concert by the Gallery Players Association. Marci has also participated in reading sessions with the Victoria Symphony Orchestra and the Penderecki String Quartet.

Her music has a harmonic language based on colour more than function. The essence of her music is in the moment - letting it “be”. Free and intuitive, her music consists of static structures that are defined and suspended by subtle changes in colour and texture. Sound intimacy through the composer to performer to audience relationship is a compositional interest - connecting on an intimate as well as musical level.

and amber cinders remain (2002)

programme note by Marci Rabe

more than the beauty of stillness, silence embraces and colours what it surrounds.

Patrick Saint-Denis (Quebec)

First a keyboard player, guitarist, violinist and singer, Patrick Saint-Denis began studying composition in 1996 with Armand Santiago at the Conservatoire de musique de Québec. He attended classes with Louis Andriessen in Netherlands (International Young Composers Meeting) and with Denys Bouliane, Tristan Murail, Magnus Lindberg and John Rea at the Rencontres de musiques nouvelles du Domaine Forget (2000). Patrick Saint-Denis is currently completing studies in composition with Serge Provost at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal. In 1999, his piece *Tox* won him first prize in the Espace Musique Society Young Composers Competition. Recently, he was also awarded first prize for *Ex Motus* in the SOCAN 2001 Young Composers Competition (vocal music category). A member of SOCAN since 2001, his composition catalogue already consists of six major works.

Berceuse pour enfants perdus au reste du monde (2002)

programme note by Patrick Saint-Denis

As in the various fields of scientific investigation, research in music rests upon the formulation of hypotheses, which are verified by way of experimentation; as a result, conclusions are drawn and new hypotheses may now be formulated, thus carrying the research further.

My starting point for the workshops was the human voice, or more precisely my dissatisfaction with vocal interpretations in the “Bel Canto” style. This way of singing strikes me as too narrow in a number of ways; I

therefore decided to develop different ways of singing (performance modes) and to test them within the framework of the ECM's workshops.

During these workshops, as I developed a repertoire of performance modes for voice with the singer, I also attempted to establish a parallel with the various instruments of the ensemble. Afterwards, I concluded that the experiment with the repertoire of performance modes for voice had proven quite fruitful, but that the relation between the vocal experimentation and its transfer to the orchestra had not. This allowed me to formulate new hypotheses, resulting in a different project for the instruments. In short, in the light of this system of research I have written a piece that, I believe, raises certain questions and problems regarding vocal interpretation.

The composition takes its name from a poem by Pierre Perrault (*Berceuse pour enfants perdus d'avance au reste du monde*), whose poetry casts a troubling look at his impressive works of cinema. The poem also serves as program for the music.

32nd season | 260th event

Sunday November 24, 2002, 12:45 pmat Glenn Gould Studio

Glenn Gould Prize Laureate Pierre Boulez

Jean-Guihen Queyras, cello (recipient of "Protegé" Prize)

Pierre Boulez, conductor; **Robert Aitken**, solo flute and direction

Christina Petrowska, piano; **Fujiko Imajishi**, violin

Patricia Green, mezzo-soprano; **New Music Concerts Ensemble**

Co-presented by The Glenn Gould Foundation and CBC Radio Two

PIERRE BOULEZ (France 1925)

First Sonata for piano (1948)

Improvisations sur Mallarmé I and II (1958/62; 1957) soprano; ensemble

Dérive (1984) piano; violin; cello; flute; clarinet; vibraphone

Messagesquise (1976) solo cello; 6 cellos

Mémoriale (1985) solo flute; 3 violins; 2 violas; cello; 2 horns

Anthèmes (1992) solo violin

Eclat (1964) piano; celeste; harp; viola; cello; alto flute; English horn; trumpet; trombone; mandolin; guitar; vibraphone; tubular bells; glockenspiel; cimbalom

HENRI DUTILLEUX (France 1916)

Trois Strophes sur le nom de SACHER (1976) solo cello

Glenn Gould Studio

250 Front St. West (CBC Broadcast Centre)

Concert @ 1 PM | Ceremony begins @ 12:45

32nd season | 261st event

Sunday December 1, 2002, 8 pm at The Music Gallery

Honouring Stefan Wolpe's Centenary

Guest Composer: Geoffrey Palmer

David Swan, Stephen Clarke; Marc Couroux, pianists

Accordes String Quartet

Fujiko Imajishi, solo violin

Within / Above / Beyond / Enactments

Illuminating Introduction with Austin Clarkson

"The Art of Action: Wolpe and the New York School of Musicians and Painters."

Illustrated with slides and sounds at 7 pm

Stefan Wolpe (Germany/USA 1902-1972) - Enactments for 3 pianos (1952)

Geoffrey Palmer (England) - String Quartet No.3 "Within, above, beyond" (2000, rev. 2002)

Geoffrey Palmer - Reconciliation for solo violin (2002)

Stefan Wolpe - Enactments for 3 pianos (reprise)

New Music Concerts gratefully acknowledges
the support of **The Stefan Wolpe Society, Inc.**

Stefan Wolpe (1902-1972)

Enactments for Three Pianos (1950-1953)

Programme note by Austin Clarkson

Stefan Wolpe was formed as much by modern developments in the visual arts as in music. He was not yet 18 when he spent the summer at the Bauhaus in Weimar. Walter Gropius had founded the revolutionary school for arts and crafts the previous year and invited the most brilliant artists to teach there. For Wolpe the Bauhaus was "the place in which modern art was being taught, experimented on, and we all traveled there like pilgrims to Jerusalem or Mecca." Wolpe attended lectures and took part in the preliminary course taught by Johannes Itten, Vassily Kandinsky, and Paul Klee. Many of the Bauhaus masters were researching correspondences among the arts, and music and theatre had an important part in the Bauhaus program. The effects of the Bauhaus are everywhere apparent in Wolpe's compositions, theoretical writings, social ideals, life-long associations with painters, and interest in vernacular musics. He learned how to research the materials of his art in order to find a balance between logical construction and imaginative expression. He applied the nonauthoritarian attitude and the respect for the individual's creative process of the Bauhaus masters in teaching his own students. Wolpe said that he "learned mostly from the painters" while from musicians he "learned only to liberate myself from my teachers."

As a Jew, Communist sympathizer and avant-garde composer Wolpe was exiled from Germany in 1933. He lived in Jerusalem for four years and then immigrated to the United States, where he became an American citizen. In New York City during the early 1950s he often attended meetings of the Artists' Club on Eighth Street. There he became close friends with Willem and Elaine de Kooning, Franz Kline, Mark Rothko, and Jack Tworkov. These painters taught from time to time at Black Mountain College, the progressive liberal arts college where Wolpe was music director from 1952-1956. It was in the mountains of North Carolina that Wolpe finished *Enactments* for Three Pianos. *Enactments* for Wolpe was a breakthrough into a new concept of

music akin to the abstract expressionist canvases of his friends. It was not until Wolpe had nearly finished the work that he settled on the title *Enactments*, thus linking it to the world of the painters. A few months earlier the art critic Harold Rosenberg published his celebrated essay on the American action painters: "What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event. The act-painting is of the same metaphysical substance as the artist's existence. The new painting has broken down every distinction between art and life."

Like the huge canvases of the painters, each movement of *Enactments* presents (not represents) a particular action over a wide expanse of sound. The painters wanted their canvases to enfold the viewer in an environment that allows for intimacy, reflection, and the evoking of meditative states. Similarly, each movement of the *Enactments* surrounds the listener in the unfolding of a continuous action. *Enactments* for Wolpe meant "acting out, being in an act of, being the act itself."

"Chant" is an exuberant, lyrical action. Wolpe described it with these images: "Stones sing, flower, throats, the chlorophyl, the dead leaves, the traces, the history of chemical reaction, the pulse of cells of what is in the making and in the changing phase." The second movement, "In a State of Flight," is an action of scattering interruptions and intersections. Flight may be soaring freedom or fearful panic and dread. The core sound of the third movement, "Held In," is a chord at the center of the pitch field. The sound blooms profusely, radiantly - summertime. The fourth movement, "Inception," is an action of emergence. Muffled, tremulous stirring - springtime. The last movement, "Fugal Motions," is an interplay of scattering and gathering actions. The subject, derived from the first movement, has a celebratory feel. Each piano has a distinct character, as though three masterful, free jazz improvisers are jamming together.

Wolpe dedicated the work to three pianists who were members of his extended family - Irma Wolpe, his second wife, and her two students Jacob Maxin and David Tudor. As it turned out three movements (1, 3, 5) were first performed by Toshi Ichyanagi, Russell Sherman, and David Tudor at Carl Fischer Hall, New York, in 1959 on a program that Wolpe shared with his student Ralph Shapey. In 1960 the Kontarsky brothers - Aloys, Alfonse, and Bernhard - performed the same three movements at Darmstadt. The work was at last given complete ten years after it was composed, in April of 1963, by Robert Miller, Lawrence Smith, and David Tudor. In 1973 Philip Corner, Joel Sachs, and Cheryl Seltzer gave *Enactments* on a concert in memory of Wolpe, and in 1982 Anne Chamberlain, Joel Sachs, and Cheryl Seltzer recorded the work for Nonesuch Records. *Enactments* has yet to appear on compact disc. A new edition of *Enactments*, engraved by David Nichol, was prepared in time for performances by groups in Germany, the United States, and Canada for the centenary celebrations.

Geoffrey Palmer, born in Dorset, England, in 1951, is a teacher and composer. He began his composing career in the 1970s as a graduate of the Huddersfield school, but then paused to devote time to his family and to teaching. In the 1990s, new compositions began to appear and these were well received. He won prizes from *Classic CD Magazine* (1997), *Music Haven* (1998) and the English Poetry and Song Society (1999), and he was awarded a doctorate in musical composition by the University of Bristol.

Broadcasts have included live BBC relays of both the second and third string quartets from the Cheltenham Festival in July 1999 and July 2000 respectively, and excerpts from his *Hadassah Variations* were broadcast on both BBC radio and television in May 2002. His music has been performed in some of the major London venues, and as far away as Finland, Poland and Japan, his connections with Canada beginning with a composer visit to the University of Toronto in 1999. He currently composes in his home on the North Sea coast, and has recently been appointed Composer in Education with the Tees Valley Music Service.

Within, above, beyond (2000/2002)

Programme note by Geoffrey Palmer

This quartet was conceived in an almost identifiable second whilst I was reading an account by one of the 'orchestra girls' at Auschwitz-Birkenau of life at the death camp there: she describes how she was orchestrating music for them all to play - for the Nazis to relax to after their day's 'work', or for the internees to march to; as she worked, her head filled with the sound of the music and the manuscript paper in front of her until she lifted her eyes to the crematorium chimneys, when her head filled with an entirely different sound. I became taken with this idea of extremely contrasting sound worlds, and the ease with which we can slip between them - a parallel, perhaps, to the ease with which we as a species seem to slip between barbarism and civilization.

So these two sound worlds became the within and the above of the title - contrasting the sweetness of, say, Puccini (quoted extensively in my quartet) with the bitterness of cruelty and murder; the beyond came a little later as I found out more about the support and generosity that the orchestra girls had towards and for each other - the same humanity in defiance of dehumanizing influences which is so magical and so vital for our future.

I worried a long time about trying to portray something so ugly as the external life of a death camp - there is enough ugly sound in the world. Then one night I switched on the car radio as I was driving home and heard the crowd scenes from Bach's St John Passion, and I knew it could be done - to create systematic and inflexible music which sets off all the more the pathos of what comes after. The sweetness comes in the form of snippets of *Madama Butterfly* - itself a disturbing story. The third element, looking beyond, is also the most forward looking, using microtonal harmonies: one of the violinists uses a violin tuned down a quartet-tone for some of this music, particularly in the final pages of the score where, like the incoming tide smoothing the sand, some of the hurt is maybe washed away.

The composing of the piece, over about a year, took me on some unexpected journeys, both inner and outer. I visited Auschwitz-Birkenau in midwinter - in snow, fog and extreme cold. I also visited Anita Lasker Wallfisch - a survivor of the camp orchestra - at her London home, and she too gave me further insights into the whole extraordinary story. I am delighted and privileged that Anita accepted the dedication of this work, which was first performed at the 2000 Cheltenham Festival by the Sorrel String Quartet.

Geoffrey Palmer

Reconciliation (2002) for solo violin

Commissioned by New Music Concerts

“Destroy, kill, and cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women”

- *Decree of Haman, Susa, 4th Century BC*

“Let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows”

- *Queen Esther, Susa, 4th Century BC*

“Every Jew that we can lay our hands on is to be destroyed now, without exception”

- *Himmler, Auschwitz, 1941*

“Every member of that suicide bomber's family must be killed”

- *Israeli at scene of bus bombing, 5th June 2002*

And so the pattern of hatred and violence goes on. This piece, written in the summer of this year, explores the notion of reconciliation at a musical level. It takes a handful of musical ideas, all related but stylistically perhaps incompatible, and tries to work them into a unified whole. It is, I suppose, a kind of a prayer that something similar can happen “out there”.

- Geoffrey Palmer, September 2002

32nd season | 262nd event

Friday January 10, 2003, 8 pm at The Music Gallery

A Glimpse at Lithuania

Guest composers **Osvaldas Balakauskas** and **Raminta Serksnyte**, guitarist **Reinbert Evers**, flutist **Robert Aitken**, tenor **Eric Shaw** and the **Accordes** string quartet present music by **Serksnyte, Kutavicius, Narbutaite and Balakauskas**
Illuminating Introduction at 7:15

Raminta Serksnyte (Lithuania 1975)

The Oriental Elegy* (2002) for string quartet

Bronius Kutavicius (Lithuania 1932)

Clocks of the Past I** (1977) (16')

guitar and string quartet

Onutė Narbutaitė (Lithuania 1956)

Sonnet à l'Amour** (1999) (14') tenor; guitar

Osvaldas Balakauskas (Lithuania 1937)

Rain for Cracow** (1991) (11') violin; piano

Osvaldas Balakauskas

Odyssey from B to C

for flute, guitar and string quartet* (2002)

* *World premiere* ** *Canadian premiere*

OSVALDAS BALAKAUSKAS

Osvaldas Balakauskas (b. 1937) trained in the Music Faculty of the Vilnius Pedagogical Institute (1957-1961), and, later, studied composition with Boris Lyatoshinsky at the Kiev Conservatoire (1964-1969). Since 1972 he has lived in Vilnius. From 1988 to 1992 he was a member of the council of the “Sajudis” movement. From 1992 to 1994 he was Lithuanian ambassador - the first after 50 years of foreign rule - to France, Spain and Portugal (residing in Paris). At the present time he is Head of the Composition Department of the Lithuanian Academy of Music. In 1996 Balakauskas was honoured with the Lithuanian National Prize, in 1998 with the Order of the Grand Duke of Lithuania Gediminas (3rd level).

His music is regularly performed at various festivals in Lithuania and abroad: Moscow Stars (1982), Warsaw Autumn (1987, 1993, 1994, 1997), 3rd International Festival of Leningrad (1988), Berlin Biennale, Zagreb Biennale (1989), Berliner Festwochen, Prague Spring (1991), World Music Days (1992, Warsaw), Schleswig-Holstein Festival (1992), Europa Musicale (1993, Munich), Wratlavia Cantans (1995), New Haven International Festival of Arts and Ideas (1996), Vale of Glamorgan (1996).

In 1997 the Cracow Academy of Music published a collection of essays “W kregu muzyki litewskiej” (“Within the Circle of Lithuanian Music”), which included first publication of Osvaldas Balakauskas’ theoretical study “The Method of Progression by Fifths”, the first of four parts comprising his “Dodecatonic, Modal and harmonic possibilities of the equally tempered 12-tone scale”. The same essay was reprinted in the book “Osvaldas Balakauskas. Music and Thoughts” published in 2000 by Baltos lankos, Vilnius, a comprehensive collection of articles, interviews and essays dedicated to the personality, musical and literary output of the composer. Osvaldas Balakauskas’ discography includes three portrait CDs of his music: “Osvaldas Balakauskas” (33 Records, Lietuva, 1995), “Osvaldas Balakauskas: As if floating within the blue space” (ASV Records, United Kingdom, 1999) and “Osvaldas Balakauskas: Concertos for violin, cello, piano, oboe & harpsichord” (BIS, Sweden, 2000).

Rain for Cracow for violin and piano (1991)

Rain for Cracow was commissioned by the organizers of the session of the European Commission for Security and Cooperation, which was held in Cracow, Poland, in 1991. According to the composer, he felt that “rain” was the best metaphor for this rather minimalist composition. The chain of textural variations based on constant repetitive motion was developed from micro-modes containing three or four tones only.

- *Donatas Katkus*

Odyssey from B to C for flute, guitar and strings (2002)

This composition is certainly “about” jazz and some of its episodes may seem to be improvised. In fact all the materials are based on a strict harmonical system - chromaticized pentatonicism — which, in my opinion, contains the essential qualities of the jazzy expression. Its formal idea is realized by the succession of eight tonically marked ‘refrains’ put in the following order: B-A-G-F-F#-E-D-C (hence “from B to C”). ‘Improvisations’ of slightly different character are placed between these ‘refrains’.

- *Osvaldas Balakauskas*

BRONIUS KUTAVICIUS

Bronius Kutavicius (b. 1932) entered the Lithuanian Academy of Music in 1959, where, until 1964, he studied composition with Prof. Antanas Raciunas. Kutavicius currently holds the position of Professor in the Composition Department of the Lithuanian Academy of Music. In 1987 he was honoured by the Lithuanian State Prize, and, in 1995, the Lithuanian National Prize. In 1996 Bronius Kutavicius received the prize of the “Probalтика” Festival in Torun, Poland, for his lifetime artistic achievements. In 1999 he was honoured with the 4th Class Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas and the Officers Cross Order for his contributions to the Republic of Poland. His music is regularly performed at various festivals in Lithuania and abroad: Warsaw Autumn (1978, 1983, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1997), Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (1990, Great Britain), Festival International des Musiques d’Aujourd’hui de Strasbourg ‘Musica’ (1992), Mare Balticum (1992, Finland), De Suite Muziekweek (1995, The Netherlands), Wratlavia Cantans (1995), Vale of Glamorgan Festival (1996, Great Britain), Baltic Arts’96 (Great Britain), Probalтика’96 (Poland), Spitalfields Festival (2002, Great Britain). In 1998 Bronius Kutavicius was a guest composer at the “Music Harvest” Festival in Odense, Denmark. The same year three concerts of his works were featured in the program of the St. Christopher Summer Music Festival in Vilnius.

Bronius Kutavicius' work is dealt with in two books: "Bronius Kutavicius. A Music of Signs and Changes" by Raminta Lampsatis (Vilnius, 1998; in English) and "Pagan Avant-Garde. Theoretical aspects of music by Bronius Kutavicius" by Inga Jasinskaite-Jankauskiene (Vilnius, 2001; in Lithuanian). To date, his discography includes three CD releases: "Oratorios" (33 Records, 1997), "Last Pagan Rites" (Ondine, 2001) and "The Gates of Jerusalem" (Dreyer.Gaido Musikproduktionen, 2001).

Clocks of the Past I, for guitar and string quartet (1977)

As in many of his compositions, in *Clocks of the Past I* Bronius Kutavicius deals with the past, and even more directly with the idea of time, since each of the two movements depicts a kind of ancient clock. The first is a "Sun Dial" and the second an "Hour Glass". The "Sun Dial" movement is fleeting and improvised, a music of direct "colored noises"; whereas the "Hour Glass" movement is very structured, with a myriad of special sound effects which make use of the available string instruments resources.

- *Raminta Lampsatis*

ONUTE NARBUTAITE

Onute Narbutaite (b. 1956) is the most prominent Lithuanian woman composer. In 1997 the composer was awarded the National Prize for the oratorio *Centones meae urbi* (Patchwork for My City) for two soloists, mixed choir and orchestra. Onute Narbutaite has been honoured with some other important prizes and her works are constantly performed at concerts and festivals in Lithuania and abroad, among them at the festivals Baltisk Musikfestival (Stockholm, 1991, 1992), Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival (1992), Helsinki Festival (1992), Musikhust (Odense, 1992), A-DEvantgarde (1993), Warszawska Jesien (1994, 1997), Spurensuche (Heidelberg, 1994), De Suite Muziekweek (Amsterdam, 1995), Artgenda 96 (Copenhagen), Kaustinen XX Chamber Music Week (1998), Frau musica nova (Cologne, 1998), Europäisches Musikfest Münsterland (1999), 35. Frankfurter Festtage der Musik (Frankfurt am Oder, 2000), young.euro.classic (Berlin, 2002), and other festivals and concerts in many European countries as well as in the USA and Japan. Onute Narbutaite has received special commissions for several of the mentioned festivals.

Onute Narbutaite acquired the fundamentals of composition from Bronius Kutavicius, and in 1979 she graduated from the Lithuanian State Conservatoire (present the Academy of Music) where she studied composition with Prof. Julius Juzeliunas. In 1979-1982 she lectured on the theory and history of music at the faculties of the Lithuanian State Conservatoire in Klaipeda. Since 1982 she has lived in Vilnius as a freelance composer.

The early works of Onute Narbutaite appeared together with the wave of "new romantics", which distinguished themselves by open emotions and a diary-like manner of speaking: String quartet No.2 (Open the Gates of Oblivion), 1980; June Music 1981 for violin and cello; and Interludium for flute, cello and organ, 1983). At first, she was compared with the generation of Mindaugas Urbaitis, Algirdas Martinaitis and Vidmantas Bartulis; however, it did not take her long to create her own individual style. In her compositions, the composer manages to perfectly combine constructive thinking (Metabole for chamber orchestra, 1992; Climber for two pianos (1988), Beads for percussion, double-bass and three to four instruments or voices of high register, 1995) with a suggestive, emotional manner of speaking (Liberatio for instrumental ensemble, 1989; Opus lugubre for string orchestra, 1991). The listener is charmed by the authenticity and vitality of music adjusted by intellect. The composer has mentioned that she is "attracted by a complete - let's call it "classical" - shape of music, where a great role belongs to form, certain aestheticism and a sense of taste and limit".

The composer gets in contact with a cultural context of various epochs in her own way. It can be light and playful, as in *Mozartsommer* 1991 for flute, violin, viola and harpsichord, where Mozart's music motifs known since childhood form a musical vision seen through today's eyes. She was stimulated by her native city

to compose the limpid Vilnius-Divertimento for flute, two recorders, guitar, harpsichord, tambourine and string orchestra (1986) and the multilingual, multi voiced counterpoint of the oratorio Centones meae urbi (1997), matured by the traditions of various nations which had lived in Lithuania for centuries.

Sonnet à l'Amour for tenor and guitar (1999)

SONNET À L'AMOUR was created for the festival "Europäisches Musikfest Münsterland", where on 24th of August, 1999, it was performed by tenor Christoph Prégardien and guitarist Reinbert Evers (the work is dedicated to the latter). This is a cycle of three parts based on the sonnet by Oscar Milosz, "À l'amour" - "To Love". However, behind this poem numerous texts of the same poet are implied, the intonations, colors and images of which had inspired the musical idiom: melancholically turned back towards the past - "beyond the bounds of time"

- *Onute Narbutaite*

RAMINTA SERKSNYTE

Raminta Serksnyte (b.1975) completed her studies for a Master's degree in the class of composition under Prof. Osvaldas Balakauskas at the Lithuanian Academy of Music (2000). In 1995 her composition Misterioso was awarded 1st Prize at the Juozas Gruodis Composers' Competition. Serksnyte attended master-classes in composition with Marek Stachowski, Helmut Lachenmann, Marc André, György Kurtág, Louis Andriessen, Vladimir Tarnopolski, Magnus Lindberg, Imants Mezaraups in Rostock (Germany, 1997), Darmstadt (Germany, 1998), Apeldoorn (The Netherlands, 2001), Dundaga (Latvia, 2002) and Stockholm (Sweden, 2002). Her works have been performed at festivals of contemporary music in Lithuania: Gaida (1997, 2000, 2002), Jauna muzika (2001), Kopa (1997), Youth Chamber Music Days (1995, 1997, 1998), Is arti (1998), Arts & Science Festival (Stockholm, 2002) and at concerts in Latvia, Estonia, and the Netherlands.

The Oriental Elegy for string quartet (2002)

The film of the identical name by the famous Russian film director Alexander Sokurov directly inspired this piece. I was shocked and stunned by its extremely subtlety, ingenious fantasy and the deepest reflection of the mysterious world of nature. Also I tried to embody the poetry of the alluring sounds of nature - such as the ripple of water, the murmur of wind, the rustle of leaves - which were actually the primary sound impulses to the musical material of this piece.

- Raminta Serksnyte

32nd season | 263rd event

Friday February 21, 2003, 8 pm at The Music Gallery

Occident~Orient

Traces: **Guy Pelletier**, flutes; **Julien Grégoire**, percussion

Duo Nishikawa: **Kohei Nishikawa**, flutes; **Takinojo Mochizuki**, percussion

François-Hugues Leclair - La Saison Intérieure (2002)

Hiroyuki Yamamoto (Japan 1967) - Le dieu de Samuel

Guy Pelletier/Julien Grégoire (Canada 1954; 1955) - Ocrient (2002)

Kohei Nishikawa/Takinojo Mochizuki (Japan 1953; 1957) -

New work for double duo

Opening new musical horizons with works that combine Western and Japanese instruments, the concert brings together flute and percussion duos from Montreal (TRACES - Guy Pelletier & Julien Grégoire) and Japan (DUO NISHIKAWA - Kohei Nishikawa & Takinojo Mochizuki). OCCIDENT~ORIENT features La Saison intérieure by François-Hugues Leclair; Le dieu de Samuel by Hiroyuki Yamamoto (a work inspired by Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot); and works for double duo in which the composers/performers explore their respective traditions.

TRACES: well known on the Montreal scene for their individual accomplishments, flutist Guy Pelletier and percussionist Julien Grégoire describe their collaboration as “a musical adventure of the nomadic variety: Perpetually on the move across our continent of sound, soliciting chance and - through improvisation - curbing chance, we follow the highways and byways of material sorted out and taken in, then settle a while to chew over the matter to our heart's content and to fix, one by one, the elements which will crystallize the musical object of our liking. Stemming from our musical history, having its source in every musical spring from which we have drunk more or less avidly according to genres, our inspiration often finds its continuation in the meeting of other artists similar to us who are returning from different landscapes and searching outside their discipline the link which will broaden the horizon, the result opening onto joint projects.”

DUO NISHIKAWA is comprised of two members of the celebrated Nishikawa Ensemble, a Japanese chamber music group founded by Kohei Nishikawa, one of Japan's most accomplished and versatile players of both Western and Japanese flutes. He studied at the Toho Gakuen Conservatory. While still a student, he became a member of the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, performing under Seji Ozawa at Carnegie Hall, the United Nations, and Champs-Élysées Hall, and went on to become principal flutist of the Osaka Philharmonic for three seasons. He subsequently left the orchestra to pursue a career specializing in Japanese bamboo flutes (shinobue and nohkan), and joined the Pro Musica Nipponia in 1980. This ensemble, which also includes percussionist Takinojo Mochizuki, specializes in traditional and contemporary Japanese repertoire, and has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Gewandhaus, Helsinki, and a number of Japanese orchestras.

32nd season | 264th event

Sunday March 23, 2003, 8 pm at Glenn Gould Studio

Pioneers! O Pioneers!

Celebrating John Weinzweig's 90th Birthday

Jean Stilwell, mezzo-soprano; Michael Grey, Highland pipes

Accordes String Quartet, John Beckwith, piano

Illuminating Introduction with the composers at 7:15

John Weinzweig (Canada 1913)

Prologue to a Tango* (2002) 4 violins and mezzo-soprano

John Weinzweig - Woodwind Quintet (1963-64)

Harry Freedman (Poland/Canada 1922)

Phoenix for string quartet* (2003)

Harry Freedman - Quintet (1962) woodwind quintet

John Beckwith (Canada 1927) - A New Pibroch* (2003)

Highland pipes, strings and drum

John Beckwith

A Domestic Song Cycle (scene 2 of Night Blooming Cereus) (1959)

* *World premiere*

*Not for delectations sweet;
Not the cushion and the slipper, not the peaceful and the studious;
Not the riches safe and palling, not for us the tame enjoyment,
Pioneers! O pioneers!
- Walt Whitman*

Biographies

Ninety years ago, on March 11, 1913, John Jacob Weinzwieg was born in Toronto. His parents, Jacob and Rose Weinzwieg, came to Canada from Poland in 1907. John had his first music lessons at age of 14, learning to play the mandolin at the neighborhood Workman's Circle Peretz School. He attended secondary school at Harbord Collegiate Institute, one of the few such institutions in Canada that possessed a school orchestra program and an enthusiastic music director, Brian McCool. He learned the tuba, double bass and saxophone and was given an opportunity to conduct the ensemble. His parents encouraged his musicality and arranged private piano lessons for him.

At the age of 19, he resolved to become a composer, and to that end enrolled at the University of Toronto in 1934. It seemed quite a comedown from his heady high school days. Healey Willan's instruction never quite got around to elucidating fugal technique - the very thing that most intrigued him. Ernest MacMillan proved to be an uninspired teacher of composition with an infuriating indifference to questions of orchestration. John came to consider the Europeans as so many Trojan horses, intent on destabilizing the nascent national cultural identity. It infuriated him to learn that openings at the Faculty of Music were advertised solely in the British newspapers.

If something wasn't around and I felt strongly that it should be, I went out and did it. I didn't ask anybody, I just did it. - JW

In order to make something happen musically during his time at the University he placed a notice in the campus newspaper inviting interested musicians to meet and form what became the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra, which he conducted for the first three years of its existence.

In the summertime the Toronto Symphony presented a series of Promenade Concerts in the Varsity arena on the University campus. It was at one of these events that Weinzwieg was able to meet with the distinguished American composer and visiting guest conductor Howard Hanson, who, after reviewing the scores Weinzwieg had pressed upon him, encouraged him to apply to the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester.

Weinzwieg found the atmosphere at Eastman quite congenial, and remembers his teacher Bernard Rogers as "a marvelous man who could respond to the psychological process and was so very quick to penetrate the areas I was struggling with." Encountering Stravinsky's masterful *The Rite of Spring* was a major revelation. He also had a visceral reaction to Alban Berg's *Lyric Suite* for string quartet. These two scores became the Alpha and Omega of his creative mission. He shortly learned that the Berg work was composed in a very special way,

employing techniques developed by Berg's teacher, Arnold Schoenberg. Frustratingly, no one at Eastman wanted to talk about it. He was shocked to hear a certain professor there dismiss Schoenberg as "a perverted Jew." He made it his mission to discover all he could about this illicit technique.

It is difficult today to comprehend the opposition to what is known as the "serial method" of composition. Though it has become a core element of every composition course in this century, seventy years ago many called it madness. It took extreme courage for Schoenberg to propose as he did that the twelve notes of the chromatic scale might be pre-organized as a basis for the creation of a work. Decades would pass before Pierre Boulez thundered, "anyone who has not felt the necessity of the serial method is superfluous."

Though he toyed with the idea of emulating his friend Louis Applebaum and moving to Hollywood to find some film work there, memories of the recent economic Depression and the impending crisis of World War II dissuaded him and he returned to Toronto in 1939, where he obtained a position at the Toronto Conservatory. Though there were precious few visitors to his teaching studio in these early days he was soon busy enough with work for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, for whom he would become the first Canadian to compose original scores for their radio dramas. He entered the Air Force as an instructor for the military band at Rockcliffe Station near Ottawa and served in this capacity from 1943 to 1945.

Soon after the War's end his classroom began to fill with returning veterans. They included such future luminaries as Harry Somers, Phil Nimmons, Victor Feldbrill and Harry Freedman. The instruction of this war-weary generation of musicians proved highly satisfying and at times even a bit rowdy. Harry Freedman fondly recalls that the responses to John's painstaking ear-training exercises would occasionally be sung with hilarious impromptu lyrics.

In 1951, John and a group of his former students met to make an important decision: they would form the Canadian League of Composers. John was swiftly acclaimed as their first President. They began to sponsor concerts of their music, and started a small library of their associates' scores, which could be loaned to interested performers. In 1959, this collection became the basis of the Canadian Music Centre.

1952 saw John's appointment to the Faculty of Music of the University of Toronto, where he taught until his retirement in 1978. His teaching emphasized craft, lucidity, abstraction and the expression of kinetic energy. To heighten a student's awareness of sonority he would assign the exercise of voicing a collection of three notes in many different registers to reveal the various sonic value of each of them. A deficiency of rhythmic inventiveness might prompt an invigorating study of the complicated rhythms of Stockhausen's piano pieces. Any lingering ghosts of the Old World were politely but firmly exorcised. So many students passed through his studio that he earned the sobriquet, "Dean of Canadian Composers."

I've always been a bit of a rebel, and I'm still ready for a good fight - JW

John does not rest on his many laurels, which include two honorary doctorates, the Orders of Canada and Ontario, the Molson Prize, and many other distinctions. At the dawn of the 21st century he began a "guerilla action," challenging the CBC to bring Canadian music into the daylight. John's efforts, along with those of CMC national director Elisabeth Bihl, ultimately resulted in a series of Canadian Composers Portraits documenting the rich heritage of Canadian music.

- Daniel Foley

Harry Freedman, O.C., was born in Poland in 1922 and came to Canada with his family when he was three. His early training was as a visual artist but during his teens he developed an interest in jazz which soon spread to classical music. At eighteen, he made the break and began studying clarinet. After four years in the RCAF during the war, he came to Toronto to study oboe with Perry Bauman and composition with John Weinzweig at the Royal Conservatory of Music. The following year he joined the Toronto Symphony Orchestra as its English horn player, a post he held for 24 years until he resigned in 1970 to devote his full time to composing. Apart from brief periods with Aaron Copland and Olivier Messiaen (Tanglewood, 1949) and Ernst Krenek (Toronto, 1953), the 5 years he spent with Weinzweig were the extent of his formal studies in composition.

Freedman is one of Canada's most frequently performed composers. His output consists of some 175 compositions, including 3 symphonies, 9 ballets, 2 hour-long stage works, as well as various works for orchestra, choir, chamber groups, and much incidental music for stage, TV and film.

He is a founding member of the Canadian League of Composers (president, 1975-78) and of the Guild of Canadian Film Composers. In 1967, he was chosen to represent Canada at the 2nd Festival of Music of the Americas and Spain in Madrid, where his First Symphony was performed. In 1970 he won the Etrog (now called the Genie) for best music in a feature film at the Canadian Film Awards. And in 1984 he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Freedman remains one of a handful of composers who earn their livelihoods solely from their music. His wide experience in all musical fields has enabled him to write in many different idioms, all of which have contributed to and are recognizable in his musical style.

The composer-critic Udo Kasemets credits Freedman with having "captured in his music much of the spiritual atmosphere of this country. If we ask, what is Canadianism in music? a great part of the answer may well lie in Freedman's work and personality... Here is a man whose ethnic origin is neither English nor French and whose birthplace was outside of this country, yet whose upbringing and education took place in Canada and whose artistic fights are fought in the atmosphere of the land of his parents' adoption."

John Beckwith, born 9 March, 1927 in Victoria, British Columbia, studied piano and sang in church choirs there before coming to Toronto in 1945 on a Royal Conservatory scholarship to study piano with Alberto Guerrero. He studied composition 1950-51 in Paris with Nadia Boulanger and holds Mus.B. (1947) and Mus.M. (1961) degrees from the University of Toronto, where his teachers included John Weinzweig.

Appointed special lecturer part-time in the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, in 1952, he became a full-time lecturer in 1955 and remained with the faculty, becoming a full professor in 1970 and serving a term as dean 1970-77. When the faculty inaugurated its Institute for Canadian Music in 1984, he was appointed its first director, and first holder of the Jean A. Chalmers professorship in Canadian music. He retired in 1990 in order to devote more time to composition.

Beckwith has published many critical and scholarly articles, was a staff (1953-55) and freelance (1955-65) script-writer and programmer for CBC music series, and a regular critic and columnist for the Toronto Star for five years (1959-62 and 63-65). In 1997 twenty-five of his talks and articles on music were collected under the title Music Papers (Golden Dog Press, Ottawa).

His over 100 compositions cover stage, orchestral, chamber, solo and choral genres. While some works explore more general 20th century concerns such as serial and collage constructions, spatial and mime elements, or the use of text-vocables, much of Beckwith's music connects with historical or regional themes of Canada. As performer and arranger with the summer concert series "Music at Sharon," 1981-91, he produced close to 200 arrangements of earlier folk music and composed music, mostly from the Canadian heritage. He

has also collaborated with several prominent Canadian writers, notably James Reaney, Jay Macpherson, Margaret Atwood, Dennis Lee, and bpNichol. He was a founding member of the Canadian Musical Heritage Society, and continues to serve on its editorial board.

Beckwith holds honorary doctorates from five Canadian universities, was recipient of the Canadian Music Council's annual medal in 1972 and "Composer of the Year" citation in 1984, as well as the Toronto Arts award for music in 1995 and the Diplome d'honneur of the Canadian Conference of the Arts in 1996. In 1987 he was named a member of the Order of Canada.

Programme Notes

John Beckwith

A Domestic Song Cycle (1958)

(scene 2 of *Night Blooming Cereus*)

Blessing Song - Dishwashing Song - Faces in the Floor (A Sweeping Song) - Rocking Song - Plant Song - Houses in Heaven

Night Blooming Cereus - a one-act chamber opera in three scenes for 8 singers and 14 instrumentalists - was first produced on CBC Radio in 1959 and on stage the following year (Hart House Theatre, Toronto). In both productions, the main mezzo role of Mrs Brown was sung by Patricia Rideout. Subsequent stagings: McGill University, 1968; University of Western Ontario, London, 1971; and University of Victoria, 1992.

The critic Milton Wilson described *Cereus* as "a rural-Ontario Winter's Tale." Set in a lonely widow's cottage in Shakespeare, Ontario, the slender plot centres around the blooming of Mrs Brown's rare cereus, an event which neighbors have been invited to witness and which inspires reconciliations and changes in their lives - and for Mrs Brown a resolution of her sad and confused feelings over the mysterious disappearance of her daughter some years earlier.

Scene 2 is our introduction to Mrs Brown. Wilson, an editor of *The Canadian Forum*, published James Reaney's text there under the title *A Domestic Song Cycle* - appropriate since her character and thoughts are revealed through her routine of rather plain daily tasks, such as dishwashing or sewing, all of which remind her of her daughter's loss.

The musical idiom balances the values of rural north-American culture against the psychological implications of the tale. The former may be heard in the diatonic hymn tune which ends the scene (Mrs Brown accompanying herself on a little harmonium), and the latter in motives such as that of the cereus, which recurs elsewhere in the score.

- John Beckwith

John Beckwith

A New Pibroch (2002)

for Highland bagpipes, percussion, and seven strings

commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of the Laidlaw Foundation

To compose for Highland pipes and an ensemble of orchestral instruments was an ambition of mine for some years before we began (in 2001) to discuss this project. I had been listening to recordings of leading Canadian

pipers, and reading some of the extensive literature about the instrument, and, in particular, about the tradition of piobaireachd or pibroch. Where did this interest originate? As a child in Victoria, the pipe bands at the annual 24 May parades enthralled me almost as much as the fireworks. Sometime in the 70s, I recall being heavily impressed by a pibroch performed by pipes and drums; in its intensity the experience was like hearing a great Indian raga. In a half-year's leave spent in Edinburgh in 1985, I learned a lot about Scottish music, including the rigid rules governing pipe playing and pipe teaching. A pleasant recreation for several years has been Scottish country dancing, through which one readily absorbs the melodic character and some of the actual repertoire - though mostly my friends and I dance to fiddles and accordions, not pipes.

The commission presented several challenges. The bagpipe scale does not relate to the tempered tuning of Western classical music: there are no semitones, and the thirds are not quite major and not quite minor (I find them especially beautiful). The strings therefore have the difficult task of adjusting; the score contains only the pitch-classes of the basic scale, for all players. There is therefore no "harmony" in the usual classical sense, but rather a projection of melodies based on these notes. The pipes have no articulation, so no metric accent (this is supplied to some degree by the player's grace-notes, but more notably by the drums); the drone is continuous, and the dynamic level uniform (namely, loud!). The piece attempts to sustain interest in a concert-room context, by accommodating these factors in various ways.

The pibroch, the serious and elegiac classic form of pipe music (the Gaelic piobaireachd translates in fact as "pipe art"), dating from the seventeenth century, consists of a slow ground followed by several increasingly elaborate variations. My work follows more or less this form: two of my variations borrow rhythmic patterns from a famous classic example, Patrick MacCrimmon's Lament, and I introduce for contrast of tempo at two points fragments from a fiddle reel of the late eighteenth century, The De'il Amang the Tailors.

David Waterhouse shared his expert knowledge of the pipes with me in several stimulating conversations during early stages of the work, and Michael Grey has been an invaluable consultant throughout. I greatly appreciate their interest and help. A New Pibroch is dedicated to the memory of a fine composer and treasured friend, Harry Somers.

- John Beckwith

Harry Freedman

Quintette (1962) for woodwind quintet

In the summer of 1960 I received a Canada Council grant which enabled me to take some time off to finish my First Symphony. When I finished it, I looked for something a little more relaxing to write. I didn't have to look far. The Toronto Wind Quintet had been formed recently and I had been asked by several members of the Quintet - all of whom were colleagues of mine in the CBC Symphony Orchestra - to write a piece for them. *Quintette* is the result.

The work is in three movements. Although my intention was to write a very light-hearted work, the effects of the Symphony I had just completed were still present. They are heard in the first movement, particularly in the nervous energy which is reminiscent of the first movement of the Symphony. There are other elements of course, colour and texture, for instance, which have always been of prime importance to me, and in this case especially, colours and textures which avoid the "village band" sound that afflicts so many wind quintets.

The second movement is a mood piece which gives the members of the quintet an opportunity to display their solo artistry. It leads directly into the last movement which is a series of dance rhythms. First a 3/4 + 3/8 rhythm which constitutes the principal material, then a second section which uses the Latin-American device of alternating 6/8 and 3/4 bars. Later there is a Blues section which serves as a bridge to the recapitulation and coda.

Many people have remarked on the similarity between the second section and the song “America” from Leonard Bernstein’s West Side Story. The reason is that they are both in the alternating 6/8 / 3/4 rhythm referred to above. This is probably the most common, the most ubiquitous, the most characteristic rhythmic device in Latin-American popular music. In short, I did not borrow that section from Bernstein; I borrowed it from the same place Bernstein borrowed it from.

- Harry Freedman

Harry Freedman

Phoenix (2003) for string quartet

commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of the Laidlaw Foundation

Phoenix is the second of my recent works that makes use of my jazz background not just for coloristic effects but for its very essence - that is, its thematic, rhythmic, harmonic, and even textural substance. (The orchestral work Duke was the first.) This is not to say that Phoenix is a jazz composition like Duke Ellington’s In A Mellotone or Charlie Parker’s Hot House, but rather that I have tried to apply to the string quartet the phrasings, the articulations, and the particular dissonances that give jazz its singular character.

This is my fourth string quartet. About 30 years ago, I wrote my first - Graphic II. It was not my best work by any means but I thought it deserved to be played more often than it subsequently was. It wasn’t until years later that I discovered why it was so seldom played. The piece required two of the four strings on each instrument to be tuned up or down a major or minor second. String players, I was told, HATE that! So rather than have the piece sit around collecting dust, I withdrew it from my catalogue and used one of the ideas in another recent string quartet, Graphic 8. Several other ideas were too interesting (he said modestly) to throw away so I was going to use them in Phoenix in a totally different way. (Hence the name). They just didn’t work in a jazz context however and it was too late to change the name so I’m stuck with it.

The work is dedicated to my daughter Lori not only because of my great admiration for what she is doing musically, but also because the main theme of the piece is one I borrowed from her latest CD. It’s been altered somewhat but I think she’ll recognize it.

- Harry Freedman

John Weinzwieg

Woodwind Quintet (1963-64)

Composed during 1963-64, the Woodwind Quintet’s fast-slow-fast movements reflect the Jazz outlook in phrasing and rhythmic fluidity. It is based on a 12-tone series that accents the minor third and minor second intervals. The first performance was presented by the Toronto Wind Quintet on Ten Centuries Concerts in Toronto, January 10, 1965.

John Weinzwieg

Prologue to a Tango (2002) for 4 Violins and Mezzo-Soprano

1. Prologue
2. The Tango goes with fiddles and bows
 - a) My sad night
 - b) My Tango

commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of the Laidlaw Foundation

The scene: A dance hall in a Latin-American town. A senora bemoans her feelings of sadness and yearning. She hears the music of a Tango and her dark mood gives way to exhilaration. She invites a senior, loitering nearby, to Tango with her. While dancing, she instructs her partner in the Tango movements. When the music stops, the senora and senior part into the silent night.

- John Weinzweig

ARTISTS

Accordes string quartet

Accordes evolved out of a string quintet that was formed in 1975 to perform a composition by John Beckwith, commissioned by the Toronto Symphony Women's Committee. Frequently heard on CBC radio, they constitute the core string players of the New Music Concerts Ensemble. Always searching for new repertoire, Accordes has commissioned works, as well as regularly premiering new compositions on the NMC series. This concentration on contemporary music has allowed them to give the Canadian, and sometimes world premieres, of works by such composers as Elliott Carter, Ben Johnson, Peter Paul Koprowski, Brian Cherney, Peter Michael Hamel, Ann Southam and Hope Lee. They have recorded extensively for the Canadian Music Centre label, Centrediscs, most recently on discs devoted to the music of Harry Freedman (Spirit Song), Harry Somers (Somers String Quartets), and Alexina Louie (Music of a Thousand Autumns).

Michael Grey, Highland piper

Michael Grey is one of the world's best and most accomplished Highland bagpipers. Among his competitive awards are four North American Piping Championships and numerous prizes in Scotland's most prestigious competitions. He has compiled four collections of original piping compositions, and has four solo recordings to his credit. In 2001, he was voted "world's greatest living composer of bagpipe music" by the Piper & Drummer Online, the leading online journal for piping. He lives in Dundas, Ontario.

Jean Stilwell, mezzo-soprano

Hailed as Carmen from City Opera in New York to Salt Lake City, Utah, mezzo-soprano Jean Stilwell recently reprised her signature role in Vancouver, scene of her first success as Bizet's fiery gypsy heroine. Amneris (Vancouver Opera) and Wozzeck's Marie (Pacific Opera, Victoria) enter her repertoire this season. Ms. Stilwell's repertoire now includes Eboli in Don Carlo and her recital tours extend through British Columbia to Newfoundland. Recordings including Berio's Folk Songs, Les Chemins de L'Amour, Spohr's Sechs Lieder, and Songs from the Heart of Somers are available from the CBC and CMC labels. The Ontario born mezzo is the official spokesperson of the ALS Society of Canada and Beatrice House.

32nd season | 265th event

Sunday April 13, 2003, 8 pm at Glenn Gould Studio

The Unknown Crumb

Guest composer: George Crumb

Teri Dunn, soprano; Ann Crumb, folk singer

Robert Aitken, solo flute and direction

Illuminating Introduction with George Crumb at 7:15

George Crumb (USA, 1929) - **Quest** (1994)

guitar, soprano sax, harp, double bass, percussion

George Crumb - **Federico's Little Songs for Children**** (1986)

soprano, flutes, harp

George Crumb - **An Idylle for the Misbegotten** (Images III) (1986)

amplified flute, 3 drummers

George Crumb - **Unto the Hills**** (2002)

folk singer, percussion quartet, amplified piano

***Canadian premiere*

Presented with the generous assistance of the

Aaron Copland Fund for Music Performing Ensembles Program

Special affiliated event

[not part of New Music Concerts subscription season]:

Friday April 11, 2003, 7:30 at the Ettore Mazzoleni Concert Hall

Royal Conservatory of Music

Music of George Crumb

Students of the **Glenn Gould Professional School** perform works of George Crumb

prepared under the supervision of the composer. RCM box office 416 408-2824 ex.321

George Crumb was born in Charleston, West Virginia on 24 October 1929. He studied at the Mason College of Music in Charleston and received the B.Mus. degree in 1950. Thereafter he studied for the Master's degree at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana under Eugene Weigel. He continued his studies under Boris Blacher at the Hochschule für Musik, Berlin from 1954-1955. He received the D.M.A. in 1959 from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor after studying with Ross Lee Finney.

Crumb first taught theory and analysis at Hollins College, Virginia before being appointed as instructor and assistant professor in piano and composition at the University of Colorado, Boulder in 1958. From 1964-1965

he also acted as creative associate and composer-in-residence at the Buffalo Center for the Creative and Performing Arts, State University of New York, Buffalo. In 1965 a long association with the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia started with his appointment as assistant professor and then full professor. Since 1983 he is the Annenberg Professor of the Humanities. He retired in May 1997 from teaching. George Crumb married Elizabeth May Brown on May 21, 1949. They have one daughter and two sons.

Though George Crumb began composing as a teenager, he regards most of his early music as juvenilia, and has discouraged performances of these early compositions. Exceptions are *Three Early Songs* (1947), for voice and piano; *Sonata* (1955) for solo violoncello; and *Variazioni* (1959) for orchestra - the composer's doctoral thesis. In the 1960s and 1970s, George Crumb produced a series of compositions that were highly successful, earning the composer numerous international performances, recordings, and awards. Many of these were vocal works based on the poetry of Federico Garcia Lorca, including *Ancient Voices of Children* (1970); *Madrigals, Books 1-4* (1965,69); *Night of the Four Moons* (1969); and *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death* (1968). Other major works from this period include: *Black Angels* (1970), for electric string quartet; *Vox Balaenae* (1971), for electric flute, electric cello and amplified piano; *Makrokosmos, Volumes 1 and 2* (1972, 73) for amplified piano; *Music for a Summer Evening* (1974) for two amplified pianos and percussion; and Crumb's largest score - *Star Child* (1977), for soprano, solo trombone, antiphonal children's voices, male speaking choir, bell ringers and large orchestra.

Crumb has received numerous awards, honors and commissions (Pulitzer Prize 1968; International Rostrum of Composers (UNESCO) Award 1971; Fromm, Guggenheim, Koussevitzky and Rockefeller Foundations) and is a member of the National Institute of Arts & Letters. In 2001 his work *Star-Child* received a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Composition. His recent works include: *Quest* (1994) for guitar and chamber ensemble; *Mundus Canis* (1998) for guitar and percussion; *Eine Kleine Mitternachtsmusik* (2001) for amplified piano; *...Unto the Hills* (2002) for folk singer, amplified piano and percussion quartet; and *Otherworldly Resonances* (2002) for two amplified pianos.

Quest

for guitar, soprano saxophone, harp, contrabass
and 2 percussion (1994)

Refrain I

I. Dark Paths

II. Fugitive Sounds

Refrain 2

III. Forgotten Dirges

IV. Fugitive Sounds

Refrain 3

V. Nocturnal

Quest was composed at the request of the guitarist David Starobin and was commissioned by Albert Augustine, Ltd. The final revised version of the work was completed in February, 1994 and is dedicated to David and Speculum Musicae.

Over the years David had played virtually all the various parts I had composed for plucked instruments — mandolin (in *Ancient Voices of Children*), electric guitar (in *Songs, Drones, and Refrains of Death*), sitar (in *Lux Aeterna*), and banjo (in *Night of the Four Moons*). In requesting this new piece David specified only that I write for acoustic guitar and that the guitar part be treated soloistically.

I initially toyed with the idea of a piece for guitar alone, but feelings of insecurity in regard to guitar technique and idiom led me quickly to the conception of an ensemble work. Within the chosen sextet of players the guitar remains the principal protagonist, but other instruments (especially the soprano saxophone) can also take over the principal “voice”. The inclusion of a wide variety of percussion instruments gave me an exceptionally colorful palette of timbral and sonoric possibilities. I would specifically cite rather unusual instruments such as the Appalachian hammered dulcimer, the African talking drum, and the Mexican rain stick.

The poetic basis for *Quest* was never very clearly articulated in my thinking. I recall pondering images such as the famous incipit of Dante’s *Inferno* (“In the midway of this our mortal life, I found me in a gloomy mood, astray ...”) and a line from Lorca (“The dark paths of the guitar”); also the concept of a “quest” as a long tortuous journey towards an ecstatic and transfigured feeling of “arrival” became associated with certain musical ideas during the sketching process. But although the movement titles are poetic and symbolic, there is no precise programmatic meaning implied. There is one use of musical quotation in the work: phrases from the famous hymn tune *Amazing Grace* are played by the soprano saxophone - initially, at the conclusion of *Dark Paths* (over a delicate web of percussion sonority), and finally, in *Nocturnal* (over a sequentially slowing ostinato of bare fifths in the harp and contrabass). On the very last page of the score a distant echo of the tune is intoned by the harmonica.

The composition of *Quest* turned out to be much more of an arduous “quest” than I could ever have imagined! An incomplete version was first performed in Amsterdam as early as 1989 (as a work in-progress). But only after several more years of constant revision did the work reach its present form.

- George Crumb

Federico’s Little Songs for Children

for soprano, flutes and harp (1986)

Federico’s *Little Songs for Children*, written for the Jubal Trio, was completed during the summer of 1986. In 1970, after the composition of *Ancient Voices of Children* (the eighth work of a Lorca cycle initiated in 1963 with *Night Music I*), I felt that I had exhausted the potential of Lorca’s poetry as a catalytic agent for my own music. I therefore turned my attention towards traditional Latin texts (in *Lux Aeterna* and *Star-Child*); and then followed settings of Walt Whitman (in *Apparition*) and Edgar Allan Poe (in *The Sleeper*). However, there remained a number of Lorca’s poems which I eventually hoped to treat musically, should inspiration return. Among these, the *Canciones para Niños* (*Songs for Children*) especially intrigued me, perhaps because the light hearted and whimsical character of these little poems contrasted so sharply with the more somber poetry I had chosen for my earlier settings. And thus, after a hiatus of sixteen years, I found myself once again immersed in Lorca’s magical imagery.

The seven little poems constituting the *Canciones para Niños* reflect many different aspects of a child’s fantasy world. The mood can be reflective, playful, mock-serious, gently ironic, or simply joyous. At an early stage in the sketching process I decided to include all four instruments of the flute family so that I might associate an appropriate timbre with the innate character of each poem. Of course the varied treatment of voice and harp, together with purely compositional choices likewise help delineate the desired mood.

The opening song, *Señorita of the Fan* (*Vivace, giocosamente*; scored with piccolo), is set for the most part in a quintuple measure. The reference to “crickets” is illustrated by a chirping piccolo motif. *Afternoon* (*Andantino quasi barcarola*; with flute in C) is delicate and idyllic throughout. *A Song Sung* (*Molto moderato, poco bizarramente*; with alto flute) is set in a very capricious style. The alto flute personifies Lorca’s “Griffon bird”. The central song of the cycle, *Snail* (*Lento, languidamente*; with bass flute), projects a sense of

timelessness and wonder. The soprano whispers the opening and concluding lines of the poem; for the central portion, the soprano sings in “Sprechstimme style”, combined with a highly coloristic use of the harp. In *The Lizard is Crying!* (*Lentamente e lamentoso*; with alto flute), the singer alternates between a quasi-cadenza style of declamation and rhythmically articulated spoken passages. The alto flute participates in the general sobbing! *A Little Song from Seville* (*Tempo di Habanera*; *scherzando, un poco buffo*; with flute in C) parodies a well-known type of Spanish popular music (and contains references to Debussy’s *La Puerta del Vino*). The concluding piece, *Silly Song* (*Prestissimo* [and alternately: *molto più lento*]; with piccolo), is ... just a silly song!

- George Crumb

An Idyll for the Misbegotten (Images III)

for flute and drums (1985)

I feel that “misbegotten” well describes the fateful and melancholy predicament of the species *homo sapiens* at the present moment in time. Mankind has become ever more “illegitimate” in the natural world of the plants and animals. The ancient sense of brotherhood with all life-forms (so poignantly expressed in the poetry of St. Francis of Assisi) has gradually and relentlessly eroded, and consequently we find ourselves monarchs of a dying world. We share the fervent hope that humankind will embrace anew nature’s “moral imperative”.

My little Idyll was inspired by these thoughts. Flute and drum are, to me (perhaps by association with ancient ethnic musics), those instruments which most powerfully evoke the voice of nature. I have suggested that ideally (even if impractically) the music should be “heard from afar, over a lake, on a moonlit evening in August”.

There are two quotations in *An Idyll for the Misbegotten* - the haunting theme of Claude Debussy’s *Syrinx* (for solo flute, 1912), and two lines from the eighth-century Chinese poet Ssu K’ung Shu:

The moon goes down. There are shivering
birds and withering grasses.

- George Crumb

An Idyll for the Misbegotten is dedicated to Robert Aitken. The world premiere was presented by New Music Concerts on November 16, 1986.

... Unto the Hills

Appalachian Songs of Sadness, Yearning and Innocence
for Singer, Percussion Quartet and Amplified Piano (2001)

- I. Poor Wayfaring Stranger
- II. All the Pretty Little Horses (An Appalachian Lullaby)
- III. Ten Thousand Miles
- IV. Appalachian Epiphany: Sunset and Nightfall
(Instrumental Interlude)
- V. Black, Black is the Color
- VI. The Riddle (An Appalachian Children’s Song)
- VII. Poor Wayfaring Stranger (Echo)

In an interview with Peter Dobrin for the Philadelphia Inquirer prior to the first performance of this work last October by Orchestra 2001, the composer explained that his treatment of the Appalachian folk songs that form the heart of this work are “not traditional arrangements. The vocal part is kept pretty intact. What could you do to those beautiful songs? But you can imagine that with percussion instruments as the predominant sound, it isn’t going to sound too much like a conventional instrumental arrangement.”

Responding to Dobrin’s observation that ... *Unto the Hills* would mark Crumb’s “first sign of compositional life in several years”, Crumb acknowledged that he “wasn’t writing much in the ‘90s, I think maybe only a couple of pieces. I needed to take some time and see which of the projects I thought about I might pursue. I did retire [from teaching] about four years ago. I probably should have retired earlier to make that transition. Teaching takes a lot of energy out of you. But now I feel much more relaxed, and maybe I can get into some more sustained writing again.”

Stylistically, Crumb describes his work as “an extension of things I’ve done. People will say, ‘Oh, he took the percussion part from his other pieces and just put the folk tunes over it.’ It’s very much my style.”

The work was composed expressly for Crumb’s daughter, Ann, an acclaimed Broadway and jazz singer. “The worst thing that could happen to this piece would be an operatic voice with a wide vibrato. That would absolutely defeat the sense of the pieces’s text. The vocal part should be a pure, quasi-untrained voice. Because the surreal effect would be the contrasts between the simple voice against the rather ambiguous background effects. At least, I’m depending on that juxtaposition to make a certain effect. I hope my confidence is not misplaced in that.”

“I see [the movements of this work] as kind of a beautiful evocation of something in my childhood, maybe, something in all of our more idealistic thoughts, perhaps. They symbolize something in the country. Maybe they seem very old now.”