

New Music Concerts 2003-2004 season

programme notes

33rd season | 267th, 268th & 269th events

Friday to Sunday September 19-21, 2003

Co-presented with The Music Gallery at St. George the Martyr

Piano Marathon Weekend

(3 concerts plus symposium events)

The Music Gallery at St. George the Martyr

Regular - \$40 (3 concerts); \$25 (2 concerts); \$15 (each)

Seniors - \$10 (each concert); Students - \$5 (each concert)

Concert 1: Friday @ 8:00

pianist Lubomyr Melnyk

continuous piano

Co-presented with CBC Radio Two

Saturday @ 1:30

Piano Forum

With Lubomyr Melnyk &

Christina Petrowska Quilico

Concert 2: Saturday @ 5:00

Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji

with Reinier van Houdt, piano

Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji (England 1892-1988)

Symphony No. 4, for piano alone *** (1962)

Sunday @ 2:30

Symposium: K.S. Sorabji

Paul Rapoport; Marc-André Roberge; Reinier van Houdt

Concert 3: Sunday @ 8:00

Portraits: Remembering Brégent

with Christina Petrowska-Quilico, piano

Michel-Georges Brégent (Canada 1948-1993)

[16] * **Portraits** (1966-1988) for solo piano

*Canadian work | ** World premiere | *** Canadian premiere

Friday September 19 at 8:00 PM
Lubomyr Melnyk in Concert

The circling, slowly evolving harmonies of Lubomyr Melnyk's "continuous music" invite the listener to contemplate the intrinsic beauty of tonality. Musical intervals, relentlessly repeated, generate fields of overtones, from which melodies magically appear. Melnyk was born in Germany to Ukrainian parents, grew up in Canada, and now lives in Sweden. He characterizes his music as a species of contemporary classical music with a somewhat "ambient" feel to it, which he plays very rapidly and without interruption or respite. Though reminiscent of Steve Reich's work in texture, his compositions feature a greater emphasis on melody rather than on pure pattern and rhythm. The Village Voice included two of his CDs in its famous "Ten albums you can't be without" list. The inspiration behind his work is the conflict between science and art. "Science has never, will never, and can never, come to grips with beauty or art," according to Mr. Melnyk. This concert is co-presented with Two New Hours on CBC Radio Two and the performance will be recorded for future broadcast.

Saturday September 20 at 1:30 PM
Piano Forum

Lubomyr Melnyk and Christina Petrowska Quilico: Melnyk discusses his continuous piano technique and Petrowska Quilico remembers her first husband, the late Michel-Georges Brégent.

Saturday September 20th at 5:00 PM
Reinier van Houdt in Concert

For NMC, Dutch pianist Reinier van Houdt undertakes K.S. Sorabji's Fourth Symphony for Piano Alone, a colossal work that is rarely performed. The piano virtuoso speaks of Sorabji with great admiration: "I am absolutely convinced that Sorabji is not just a curious and unknown composer but that he is a creative genius of enormous stature, whose music deserves a chance to find a place in concert-halls to prove its indisputable beauty... Sorabji is a very important missing link between tradition and the music of today: in his music the implications of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, Ravel and also of the classical Arabic and Indian music crystallize and at the same time are being developed so far that they predate modern masters like Messiaen, Nancarrow and Stockhausen, and that is I think unique and should be made available to audiences." Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji (1892-1988) was a composer of Parsi-Indian descent who lived all of his life in England. His piano works are known, or rather, notorious for their incredible complexity and enormous demands made on the technical prowess and stamina of the performer.

PLEASE NOTE: This 6-hour long performance includes 3 intermissions.

Sunday September 21 at 2:30 PM
Symposium: The Music of
Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji

Musicologists Paul Rapoport and Marc-André Roberge join pianist Reinier van Houdt to discuss the work of this remarkable composer.

Sunday September 21 at 8:00 PM
Christina Petrowska Quilico in Concert

In a feature article in Fanfare Record Magazine, Christina Petrowska Quilico was headlined as a "Renaissance

woman...and part-time lounge lizard". One of Canada's foremost pianists, she is also a most innovative and adventurous one with eclectic programming. Her vast and diverse repertoire is reflected in 14 recordings of classical, romantic, new and world music, including a Juno-nominated CD with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. An unusually gifted and well-rounded performer, she has worked with leading composers of the 20th century such as Pierre Boulez, John Cage, György Ligeti, Krystof Penderecki, Karlheinz Stockhausen among others, and Canadian composers including Claude Vivier, Christos Hatzis, Chris Paul Harman, Glenn Buhr, Larysa Kuzmenko, Omar Daniel, Alexina Louie, and Heather Schmidt, premiering countless new works, many of which were written for her. A respected pedagogue, she is Professor of Piano and Musicology at York University in Toronto, and an acclaimed visual artist and author of three published books.

Portraits (1966-1988) by Michel-Georges Brégent

Brégent was born in Montréal in 1948, and died on September 4, 1993. His ambition was "to create music that is perfectly balanced between the intellectual, emotional and spiritual: music that has a 'raison d'être'." The well-known Belgian musicologist Harry Halbreich has said of Brégent that "he is a mystical visionary whose acute intelligence leads him to storm, with greatest confidence, the strangest utopias. Brégent is also a composer whose complex structures and great instrumental virtuosity are expressed in generous, flamboyant music". This will be the first time that Brégent's cycle of Portraits is performed in its entirety.

Exhibit of Christina Petrowska Quilico's drawings

An artist and poet as well as a pianist, Christina Petrowska Quilico has transformed many of her thoughts on the compositions of Pierre Boulez, György Ligeti, Olivier Messiaen, Claude Vivier and Michel-Georges Brégent into evocative poetry and hundreds of intricate drawings, works which illuminate the complete process by which notes on the page are made music by a consummate performer. These drawings testify of a unique meeting of sensibilities and minds, the implicit contract between composer and performer made visual. "The sixteen Portraits for piano by Michel-Georges inspired me as a pianist and as an illustrator", she says. "My drawings are but a fragment and fraction of what I feel in performing this mammoth cycle of piano works. Each performance could inspire another set of drawings. The composer becomes immortal and always elusive, just out of our reach, and so we continue to practice, draw and listen."

Christina Petrowska Quilico's drawings will be on display at St. George the Martyr throughout The Piano Marathon weekend.

Piano Marathon Weekend Pass \$40 | 416-961-9594

Individual concerts \$15 (regular) \$10 (seniors) \$5 (students)

33rd season | 270th event

Monday November 3, 2003 · 8:00 pm

Co-presented with Goethe-Institut Toronto

Helmut Lachenmann

Glenn Gould Studio

Guest artists: **Helmut Lachenmann**,
composer, narrator and pianist

Yukiko Sugawara, piano · **David Hetherington**, cello

New Music Concerts Ensemble · **Robert Aitken**, Director

Helmut Lachenmann (Germany 1935)

“zwei Gefühle” *** (1991-1992)

for narrator and ensemble

Serynade *** (1998-99)

piano solo (Yukiko Sugawara)

Pression (1969-70) solo cello

Ein Kinderspiel (1980) solo piano

(Helmut Lachenmann)

“zwei Gefühle” (reprise)

*Canadian work | ** World premiere | *** Canadian premiere

Helmut Lachenmann

A Voyage to the Edge of Music

Austin Clarkson

President, New Music Concerts

Nearly one hundred years ago, Ferruccio Busoni, the legendary pianist, composer, author, mentor, editor, and musical prophet, proclaimed, “Music was born free and to win freedom is its destiny.” He worshiped Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven as patron saints of the music of liberation, but he railed against academicians who fetishized the masters and turned their music into a religion of form. He deplored the rule-bound music of his contemporaries and looked to modern literature and painting as less hampered by tradition. Busoni gave his many students permission to follow their bliss and be their own law-makers in whatever they did. Composers Edgard Varèse, Otto Luening, Kurt Weill, and Stefan Wolpe, pianists Egon Petri, Mark Hambourg, and Edward Steuermann, Natalie Curtis (who documented the music of the native peoples of North America) and the Canadian dancer Maud Allan were among the many explorers who acknowledged Busoni as their greatest mentor. Each practiced the aesthetic of liberation in their own way, for Busoni insisted that if music were to win its freedom, the artist must discover his or her own path, just as each work of art must evolve its own form. Busoni was absorbed by too many creative projects to found a school, which is why his name has been all but forgotten.

Busoni's revolutionary spirit lives on in composers like Helmut Lachenmann, who since the late 1960s has carried the aesthetic of liberation into uncharted waters. Consciously or not, Lachenmann has taken several of Busoni's precepts as his own. Busoni claimed that music most nearly approaches the essential nature of the art in the transitions between sound and silence, and Lachenmann has explored the vast reaches of the barely audible with endless ingenuity. With regular musical instruments he produces sounds of breathing, whispering, whistling, sighing, humming, sighing, rustling, blurring, smacking, scratching, scraping, creaking, squeaking, sometimes loudly, but often almost inaudibly. Busoni insisted that the system of twelve equal-tempered pitches in the octave is woefully inadequate and called for infinite gradations of sound. He proposed a new notation for micro-intervals and welcomed the invention of the Dynamophone of Thaddeus Cahill, the first electronic organ that could produce such intervals. Lachenmann does not use electronic sources, but instead reduces the sounds of conventional instruments to their most primitive constituents. He burrows in behind the brilliant, resonant, exuberant tones of familiar instruments and finds what is hidden away in their attics and basements. He then recycles these found remnants into new compounds, rather like splicing genes to create new life-forms. The challenge is to make music from such materials, for the systems of tonality or serialism do not apply. Lachenmann, as did Busoni, Varèse, Wolpe, and others before him, rejects all systems and trusts in his intuitive form-sense to guide the creative process. At each and every moment the emerging identity of the piece directs the composer's ear as to what needs to be next. No matter how strange his pieces may sound, they have an unerring authenticity and integrity and stand strong and resilient, the offspring of a lively musical instinct and a formidable intelligence.

Some listeners may object to concert music that uses genetically modified sounds. In fact, they have been hearing recombinant sounds in countless movie soundtracks - human cries in creaking doors, and so forth. The threat is not to the sanctity of music so much as to ingrained habits of lazy listening. As Busoni said, half the comprehension of a musical work must come from the effort of the listener. Lachenmann in turn seeks to broaden the experience of listening rather than satisfy its expectations, for we only can discover ourselves by penetrating into the unknown. He quotes the playwright Georg Büchner, "Man is an abyss; he leaves you reeling when you look down." Lachenmann believes that only by traversing the abyss can we change. Listening, for Lachenmann, is "the capacity to discover in oneself new antennae, new sensors, new sensibilities; to discover one's own alterability and use it to resist the unfreedom which it uncovers. Listening means discovering oneself anew; it means changing oneself."

Lachenmann is speaking not only of the audience and the musicians who must learn new ways of playing their instruments, but of himself. For like the alchemists who sought to transmute the base matter of the soul into noble gold, Lachenmann discovers himself anew in each piece. Which brings me to the piece that will be featured this evening: "*Two Feelings*," *Music with Leonardo*. Unusually for Lachenmann, whose music is usually for instruments alone, the piece sets a text and became part of his opera on the Hans Christian Andersen story of *The Little Matchgirl*. Two speakers recite excerpts from the writings of Leonardo da Vinci. The subtitle "Music with Leonardo" indicates that Lachenmann is speaking through the persona of Leonardo. For Lachenmann, Leonardo was "a paragon of a sentient observer of the powerful forces of nature and of his own creativity," which reveals his own approach to his role as a composer. (Busoni, as it happens, also identified with Leonardo and saw him as a Faustian figure. He considered writing an opera on "The Italian Faust," but instead composed his *Doktor Faust*.)

In the first of the two excerpts (see below) Leonardo observes the Sicilian coastline from the turbulent Straits of Messina (Scylla and Charybdis) to the volcanic island of Stromboli. It is a scene of untrammelled violence. Nothing can resist or contain the raging forces of the sea and the earth. In the second passage Leonardo is no longer withdrawn in reverie, but is actively investigating the marvelous diversity of the forms of Nature he sees before him. He peers into a cave and is overcome by two feelings - the fear of darkness and the desire to explore the unknown. As the second excerpt begins, another text is heard as four of the instrumentalists speak a few words by Nietzsche: "O Man, give heed, what does deep midnight say." (Mahler also set these words

from *Thus Spake Zarathustra* in the utter stillness and mystery of the fourth movement of his Third Symphony.)

Just as Leonardo, at the edge of the abyss, is caught between the fear of Nature's terrifying power and the insatiable desire to plumb her mysteries, so Lachenmann holds his ears to the fire so that he may discover new sound-forms. The musicians will be performing with an equivalent sense of voyaging to the edge of music. It is up to the audience to match this commitment by listening intently without expectations and preconceptions. For then we may discover in the shock and awe of the moment a new birth, some new knowledge of oneself, Nature, and the possibilities of music.

Desire for Knowledge

Leonardo da Vinci, from the Arundel Codex

The raging sea, whipped by the north wind, does not make such a roar with its tumultuous waters between Charybdis and Scylla. Neither do Stromboli nor Mongibello, when the sulfurous flames that they enclose force and burst the tall mountain, spewing stones and earth into the air along with the spurting flame that they vomit; neither Mongibello, when its blazing caves release the elements restrained with such difficulty, spitting and vomiting them furiously round about, repulsing everything which might be an obstacle to their impetuous surge. . . .

Drawn from my vain reverie and desirous of seeing the myriad varied forms created by fecund Nature, I wandered a moment amongst the shadowy rocks and eventually reached the entrance of a large cave before which I remained a moment, stunned and totally unaware of this marvel. I bent my back, my left hand on my knee and, with my right hand, shaded my squinting eyes, repeatedly leaning from one side to the other, attempting to distinguish something within. But that was made impossible by the darkness which reigned. Soon, two things rose up in me: fear and desire - the fear of the dark and threatening grotto, and the desire to see if there was nothing mysterious there.

Translated by J. T. Tuttle]

A large portion of *zwei Gefühle* was written in Luigi Nono's empty house in Sardinia (he died in 1990), and there is no doubt that his memory influenced my conception of the piece at the time.

My work began from the experience of "structural hearing", which is to say the perception and observation of what resonates in an immediate manner, but also the relationships which structure it. These are tied to interior images and feelings which do not in any way distract from this process of observation, but remain indissolubly linked to it and even give it a particular intensity. This is the strange situation which we encounter when we decipher a message concerning us. The immediate job of perception, the (eventually laborious) recognition and assembly of signs on the one hand and, on the other, the power of the message as an intrinsic structure, are strongly intertwined, to the extent of determining one another and forming a complex and unitary experience.

The two narrators of Leonardo da Vinci's text in *zwei Gefühle* (Two Feelings) are the two quasi-complementary conscious parts of an imaginary "Wanderer" and of a reader who marvels in silence. These two function in an unconscious manner akin to the two hands of a blind man working together, which might

pass over the text as over a precious inscription, seizing upon its particles, one after the other, and assembling them in his memory as well as can be expected. This assemblage is both concentrated and sober, “damaged” and “struck” (in both senses of the term), since semantically it is an anxious search conducted in ignorance, in which the groping blind man recognizes himself. When I integrated this music into my opera, the two parts were merged into a version for one speaker.

Whatever resonates is understood as twofold: a material deduced and transformed from the phonetic components and, at the same time, as sparse fragments of a traditional reservoir of affective gestures, arranged in a new way through the sonic relationship of acoustic fields, articulated variously from within, like different volcanoes which come to life or cool off. A Mediterranean sound landscape at an inhospitable altitude - a “pastorale” written while pondering over what links me to the composer of *Hay que caminar*.

- Helmut Lachenmann, translated by J. T. Tuttle
[program notes for the Huddersfield Festival 2000]

Serynade (1998/99)

for solo piano (Yukiko Sugawara)

Serynade was written for Lachenmann’s wife, the pianist Yukiko Sugawara; the title is configured to refer to her name. It is Lachenmann’s longest piano work to date and is notable for its relatively sparing employment of extended keyboard techniques. In its extensive use of resonances and harmonics produced by silently depressed keys and highly intricate use of the pedals, it resembles in part the earlier piano works *Echo Andante* (1962), *Wiegenmusik* (1963), *Ein Kinderspiel* (1980) and the monumental piano concerto *Ausklang* (1984-85). Sometimes the harmonics form into a parallel layer of information whose importance is as great as that of conventionally ‘sounding’ notes.

Lachenmann utilizes a relatively familiar array of gestures, including block chords, clusters and virtuoso runs up and down the keyboard, as well as many repeated notes. These elements have a clear history, both in Lachenmann’s own music and that of others; what is more important is their contextualization. Our perception of any sonic effect is highly conditioned by those others that surround it; Lachenmann subverts expectations in this respect to produce a music that is continually startling and intriguing. On the larger scale, sometimes material is extended beyond the length that might make it containable so as to open the music out onto different planes, to move beyond that which has been predicated by what has gone earlier. In the final section, Lachenmann makes use of powerful bass notes together with much quieter ones in the treble, like a contemporary re-working of Messiaen’s concept of ‘extended resonance’. Structurally the piece would seem to organize itself into three or possibly four movements; a homage (by inversion) to a classical sonata?

- Ian Pace

Yukiko Sugawara was born in Sapporo, Japan, where she received her first piano instruction with Michiko Endo, followed by studies with Aiko Iguchi at the Toho college of music in Tokyo, with Erich in Berlin and Alois Kontarsky in Cologne. Ms. Sugawara won several international competitions, including the Kranichsteiner music prize, and has performed at the Donaueschinger music days, the Holland Festival, Festival d’Automme à Paris, the Huddersfield music festival and recitals in Chicago, New York, and Tokyo. Ms. Sugawara is also a member of the Trio Accanto and the ensemble recherche. CDs of her chamber music and solo works are available on the Wergo, Col Legno and Cairo labels.

Ein Kinderspiel (1980)

seven short pieces for piano

Helmut Lachenmann, piano

1. Hänschen Klein · Little Johnny
2. Wolken Im Eisigen Mondlicht · Clouds in Icy Moonlight
3. Akiko
4. Falscher Chinese (Ein Wenig Besoffen) · Fake Chinese (slightly drunk)
5. Filter-Schaukel · Filter Swing
6. Glockenturm · Bell Tower
7. Schattentanz · Shadow Dance

Although written for my son David and - in part - for my at that time seven-year-old daughter Akiko to perform, these pieces are not pedagogical music and not necessarily for children. Childhood and the musical experiences associated with it are a deep component of the internal world of each adult. These pieces are in all other respects developed from the experiences which I had developed in my last larger works (Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied and Salut für Caudwell): indeed experiences of structural thinking, projects on already familiar formulas and samples existing in the society as for instance child songs, dance forms and the simplest utilitarian models. It was also important to me to transform the change of hearing and the aesthetic behavior offered in my pieces from an abstract model to a series of “challenges” in which the listener (as well as the composer) feels at home and secure. The result is easy to play and easy to understand: a children’s game, but aesthetically without compromises

- Helmut Lachenmann, 1982

Pression (1969/70)

for solo violoncello

This piece arose in relation to ideas about an ‘instrumental musique concrète’, a music for which the acoustic qualities are organized in such a way that the actual situation of the making of sound, the mechanical conditions and oppositions in the experience of music are involved. Thus, instrumental alienation logically arises from the necessity to range the energetic conditions in which sound is made and to link them in different groups.

This constitutes an offer to the listener (and not a rejection, the way this piece in particular is always one-sidedly interpreted): the offer to listen in the sense of listening differently. To experience a musical coherence in the light of a thus consciously designed concept of material should mean: to experience oneself.

- Helmut Lachenmann

A member of the Toronto Symphony since 1970, David Hetherington is currently the orchestra’s Acting Principal Cellist. As a chamber musician, he has toured Canada, the United States and Europe and is a founding member of the Amici Chamber Ensemble, which presents an annual concert series at Glenn Gould Studio and has made six recordings for Summit Records and Naxos. His own string quartet, Accordes, performs regularly for New Music Concerts and was recently nominated for a Juno Award for its recording of Harry Somers’ String Quartets on Centrediscs, for which Hetherington also made the premiere recording of

Talivaldis Kenins' prize-winning cello sonata. Earlier this season David Hetherington performed a solo recital at the Elora Festival and was featured in Saint-Saëns' A minor concerto with the Niagara Symphony.

Helmut Lachenmann was born in Stuttgart in 1935 and studied there at the Musikhochschule between 1955 and 1958. His interest in the current avant garde was reinforced by his first visit to the Darmstadt Ferienkurse in 1957, where he met Luigi Nono, with whom he studied in Venice between 1958 and 1960. Stockhausen was added to the pedagogical mix three years later, when Lachenmann attended the Cologne New Music Course. In 1966 Lachenmann embarked on his own academic career, lecturing first on music theory at the Stuttgart Musikhochschule and subsequently teaching at the Ludwigsburg Pädagogische Hochschule and the Musikhochschule in Hanover, before returning to live in Stuttgart in 1981.

When Lachenmann's music began to be performed in the early 1960s, first at the Venice Biennale and at Darmstadt, his works appeared to fit comfortably into the aesthetic of the post-Webern serialists, in particular revealing the influence of Nono's pointilliste techniques. From the late 1960s onward, however, Lachenmann began to look for a new approach to the problems of musical language and syntax. In a series of works, beginning with *temA* (1968), *Pression* for solo cello (1969), and *Air* for percussionist and orchestra (1969), he started to exploit a new, alienated sound world that treated instrumental technique in a radically unconventional way.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, with scores such as the string quartet *Gran Torso* (1972), *Salut für Caldwell* for two guitars (1977), and *Mouvement (vor der Estarrung)* for chamber orchestra (1984), Lachenmann continued to question many of the basic assumptions about the function of music and the expectations made of it, backing up his musical achievement with the vigorous polemics of his writing and lectures. Always, though, the pressure of tradition remained a background presence in his explorations, sometimes even emerging as audible points of reference in his scores. In his most recent pieces, Lachenmann has begun to pick up recognizable elements of a post-serial language which reveal the tradition from which his music evolved.

Since 1983, Lachenmann has been a featured composer at numerous festivals and concert series in Germany and abroad, including the Holland Festival in Amsterdam, *Ars Musica* in Brussels, *Musik der Zeit* in Cologne, *Festival d'Automne* in Paris, *Wien Modern* in Vienna, and *Tage für neue Musik* in Stuttgart and Zurich. He is a member of the *Akademie der Künste* in Berlin and of the *Akademien der Künste* in Hamburg, Leipzig, Mannheim, Munich, and Brussels.

33rd season | 271st & 272nd events

Sunday November 30, 2003 | 3:30 / 8:00

Schafer Quartet Cycle

Glenn Gould Studio

Complete Schafer String Quartets · **Quatuor Molinari**

with guest soprano **Marie-Danielle Parent**

Regular - \$40 (2 concerts); \$25 (each)

Senior - \$25 (2); \$15 (each)

R. Murray Schafer (Canada 1933):

- * **String Quartet No 1** (1970)
- * **String Quartet No 2** “Waves” (1976)
- * **String Quartet No 3** (1981)
- * **String Quartet No 4** (1989)
- * **String Quartet No 5** “Rosalind” (1989)
- * **String Quartet No 6** “Parting Wild Horses Mane” (1993)
- * **String Quartet No 7** with soprano obbligato (1998)
- * **String Quartet No 8** (2001)

R. MURRAY SCHAFFER - COMPLETE STRING QUARTETS(2 Concerts) - Canada’s leading composer is well known for his environmental music-theatre works, but equally impressive is Schafer’s cycle of string quartets. Montreal’s exciting Quatuor Molinari performed the first seven in a weekend marathon in Montreal several years ago to great acclaim, and recorded them for the ATMA label. Having commissioned the Seventh Quartet, the Molinari also premiered and recorded the Eighth, however this New Music Concerts performance will be the first to present the cycle in its entirety. The event will also include a talk by Mr. Schafer preceding the evening concert. Sculptures by the quartet’s namesake, artist Guido Molinari, are utilized in the set design for Quartet No.7, a work that also features a marching cellist and obbligato soprano.

Acclaimed by the public and the Canadian critics since its foundation in 1997, the Molinari Quartet has given itself the mandate to perform works from the 20th and 21st centuries repertoire for string quartet, to commission new works and to initiate discussions between musicians, artists and the public.

Recipient of seven Opus Prizes awarded by the Quebec Music Council to underline musical excellence on the Quebec concert stage, the Molinari Quartet was chosen in December 2000 as Music Laureate for the *Grand Prix* of the Montreal Urban Community Arts Council.

The name *Molinari* reflects well the commitment of the musicians to contemporary music repertoire, for

Canadian painter Guido Molinari's name has come to represent the artistic avant-garde for over forty years. In addition to many Canadian works, the Molinari Quartet's repertoire includes among others, quartets by Bartók, Britten, Glass, Korngold, Kurtág, Ligeti, Lutoslawski, Martinu, Prokofiev, Ravel, Scelsi, Schnittke, Shostakovich and Webern.

Described by the critics as an "essential" and "prodigious" ensemble, even "Canada's answer to the Kronos or Arditti Quartet", the Molinari Quartet has established itself as one of Canada's leading string quartets. Its participation at the "Strings of the Future 1999" festival drew much attention from the international press (*Le monde de la musique*, *The Strad*, *Strings*).

The Molinari Quartet was heard twice as soloist with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra under Charles Dutoit and was invited to perform in numerous concert series and festivals including *Strings of the Future* (Ottawa), *Musiques au présent* (Québec), *Festival Vancouver*, *Music Toronto*, *New Music Concerts* (Toronto), *Ottawa International chamber music festival*, *Orford Festival*, *GroundSwell* (Winnipeg), *Saskatoon Symphony Festival of New Music Aeolian Concerts* and *Hill and Hollow Music* (New York).

The Molinari Quartet has commissioned R. Murray Schafer's 7th quartet and has also premiered his 8th Quartet, written also for the Molinari. The Quartet has commissioned and premiered several works from Canadian composers such as Otto Joachim, Michel Gonneville, Marc Hyland, Michael Matthews, Kelly-Marie Murphy, David Scott, and Ana Sokolovic as well as giving north-american premieres of many works.

The Molinari Quartet is the only quartet to have to its repertoire R. Murray Schafer's eight string quartets and its recording of the first seven on the ATMA Classic label has received international critical acclaim. The recording received the Opus Prize for *Record of the year - contemporary, new and electroacoustic music* and was in nomination for a Juno Award 2001 in the category of Best Classical Album: Solo or Chamber Ensemble. The Molinari Quartet just released a new CD with the Quartet no.8, *Theseus* and *Beauty and the Beast* by Schafer, on ATMA Classique.

*Canadian work | ** World premiere | *** Canadian premiere

Sunday January 11, 2004 · 8:00 pm

Latinoamericano

The Music Gallery at St. George the Martyr

Guest Artists: **Cuarteto Latinoamericano**

Saul Bitrán and **Aron Bitrán**, violins

Javier Montiel, viola, **Alvaro Bitrán**, cello

with **Robert Aitken**, solo flute

José Evangelista (Spain/Canada 1943)

* **Spanish Garland** (1993) 10'

Carlos Sanchez Gutierrez (Mexico 1964)

Cinco para Cuatro (2002) 13'

Gabriela Ortiz (Mexico 1964)

La Calaca (finale from *Altar de Muertos*) (2001) 8'

Mario Lavista (Mexico 1943)

String Quartet No. 4 "Sinfonias" (1997) 18'

Alex Pauk (Canada 1945)

* **Flute Quintet** **

(2003, NMC commission) 20'

Diego Luzuriaga (Equador 1955)

Yaravi & Yumbo / Estreno Mundiale **

for flute and quartet (2002/3, NMC commission)

*Canadian work | ** World premiere | *** Canadian premiere

The Cuarteto Latinoamericano was founded in Mexico in 1981, and two years later was awarded the top prize from that country's National Music Critics Association. Since then the group has risen to the ranks of the world's most esteemed chamber music players through their many recordings and through their concerts in North and South America, Central Europe and Scandinavia.

In concert the group has collaborated with such international figures as flutist Julius Baker, cellist Janos Starker, guitarist Narciso Yepes and conductor Eduardo Mata. The Cuarteto Latinoamericano has recorded most of the existing string quartets by Mexican composers, as well as the traditional repertoire by Ravel, Dvorak, Borodin, Gershwin, and Puccini. Their first digital recording of quartets by Heitor Villa-Lobos, Alberto Ginastera and Silvestre Revueltas was selected as "Critic's Choice for 1989" by The New York Times.

The Cuarteto Latinoamericano has been quartet-in-residence at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (USA) since 1987. They are also the quartet-in-residence at the San Miguel de Allende Chamber Music Festival in Mexico. Their teaching has influenced a whole generation of Mexican string players.

José Evangelista (Spain/Canada 1943)

Spanish Garland (1993)

José Evangelista pursues an artistic path away from the mainstream of contemporary music. He has explored ways of making a music exclusively based on melody. Hence, he has developed a heterophonic writing, both for instruments and orchestra, where the melodic line generates echoes of itself creating an illusion of polyphony. His music draws its roots from a large vision of tradition: to his Spanish origins he has added the influence of the Indonesian gamelan, the Western avant-garde and that of modal music.

Evangelista was born in Valencia, Spain in 1943. He began his musical studies with Vicente Asencio, but simultaneously studied Physics and later worked in computers, which led him to Canada. After settling in Montreal in 1970, he studied composition with André Prévost and Bruce Mather. Since 1979, he is a professor at the University of Montreal where he created the Balinese Gamelan Workshop in 1987. He has been a founding member of Les événements du Neuf (new music) and Traditions musicales du monde (concert series of world music) and since 1987 he has been on the board of the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec. He received awards from the Spanish Ministry of Culture in 1982, the International Rostrum for Composers in 1984, and from ICONS (Toronto) in 1992. Since 1985 his works have represented Canada on four World Music Days (ISCM). He has also received numerous commissions resulting in performances of his works in Canada, the US and Europe. He is presently composer in residence with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

SPANISH GARLAND

This piece consists of 12 folk melodies from Spain. They include work songs, lullabies, entertainment songs, religious songs and dances. They come from a variety of regions and most of them are probably fairly old. These arrangements are not harmonizations. The melodies are presented as such, or at most repeated, without formal developments or modulations. There is a systematic use of ornamentations and heterophony which nearly gives the impression of real polyphony, but with no counterpoint or chords. My purpose has been to emphasize the validity of Spanish folk music in its pure linear dimension, that is, as melody. As a matter of fact, many folk tunes are monodic originally, without harmonic accompaniment and they often exhibit modal features difficult to reconcile with the harmonic tonal language.

- José Evangelista

Carlos Sánchez Gutiérrez (Mexico 1964)

Cinco para Cuatro (2002)

The music of Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez has been described by the press as “vigorously organized and highly visceral neither eclectic nor post-modern nor owing allegiance to any passing fashion.” Born in Mexico City in 1964, he grew up in Guadalajara, and later studied at the Peabody Conservatory, Yale University, Princeton and Tanglewood under Henri Dutilleux, Jacob Druckman, and Martin Bresnick. He has taught composition at San Francisco State University and at the Yale School of Music, and is now Associate Professor of Composition at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York.

Among the many awards he has received are the First Prize at the 2001 Sinfonica Orchestral Competition, as well as the Lee Ettelson Composition Award. He has also been honored in recent years with fellowships from the Guggenheim, Fromm, Rockefeller and Camargo Foundations; was the 2000-01 American Academy of Arts and Letters Charles Ives Fellow; and has received two B.M.I composition awards, the Mozart Medal from the governments of Mexico and Austria, and a Fulbright Fellowship. Sanchez-Gutierrez is a member of Mexico's prestigious Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte and was named Person of the Year 2000 by the Mexican daily *Público*. His work is performed and recorded frequently in the U.S, Latin America, Europe and Japan.

CINCO PARA CUATRO

This collection of five short pieces for string quartet was written on a commission from Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, and is dedicated to my friends of the Cuarteto Latinoamericano.

Each of these pieces explores in concentrated manner a unique emotional plateau, as well as a distinct musical raw material. Vocalise focuses on very tight harmonies that intend nonetheless to create an effect of great amplitude and open space. Chorale is a rhythmic study that employs an exclusively monophonic texture. Waves create a labyrinth of intervals in a musical context governed by a relentless ostinato. Meditation also explores a variety of intervallic configurations in a texture of extreme, Spartan simplicity. Finally, Ostinato Furioso combines most of the features found in the previous pieces, in a dance of indomitable frenzy.

- Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez

Mario Lavista (Mexico 1943)

String Quartet No. 4 “Sinfonias” (1997)

Mario Lavista was born in Mexico City in 1943; he studied composition there with Carlos Chávez, Rodolfo Halffter, and Ernesto Quintanar, in Paris with Jean Etienne Marie and Henri Pousseur, and in Germany with Karlheinz Stockhausen. In 1987, Lavista was named a member of the Mexican Academy of Arts and was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to compose an opera, *Aura*. His works have been performed by the American Composers Orchestra and Pittsburgh and Dallas Symphonies, and in 1991 the San Antonio Symphony commissioned his *Clepsidra*. Recent commissions include *Dance of Degas's Dancers*, for putist Jill Felber; *Five Brief Dances*, for the Mexico City Woodwind Quintet; *Missa ad Consolationis Dominam Nostram*, for choir a capella, for the Contemporary Vocal Ensemble; *String Quartet No. 3* for the Kronos Quartet; *String Quartet No. 4* for Cornell University and the Cuarteto Latinoamericano, and *String Quartet No. 6*, for the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and the Cuarteto Latinoamericano. Mr. Lavista presently teaches composition, analysis, and 20th-century music at the National Conservatory of Music in Mexico City.

String Quartet No. 4 "Symphonies"

I wrote "Symphonies" for string quartet in 1996 on a commission from Joan Niles Sears, who asked me to compose a piece of music that could eventually accompany her soul after the death of her body. Having this rather unusual but indeed fascinating request in mind, and with the personal belief that there is some kind of music which the soul itself is able to hear, I undertook to compose music destined to be part of a sacred ritual. I did not intend to write funeral music, but rather a work of religious character meant to glorify God.

There are in the piece some contrasting musical events that give the impression of blending with each other as if in a dream, where one cannot foresee what is coming next. One of this musical events is based on an ancient melody taken from the *Scolica enchiridis de musica*, a ninth-century treatise, in which it appears as an example to illustrate "symphonies", i.e the relationship between two or more voices lying an octave, fifth or fourth apart. The text of this melody is as follows:

Nos qui vivimus benedicimus Dominum ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum (We who are living bless the Lord from this moment forever and ever)

The piece consists of a single movement lasting approximately 17 minutes. It was premiered by the Cuarteto Latinoamericano in Ithaca, NY on April 15, 1997, and is dedicated to Joan Niles Sears.

- Mario Lavista

Alex Pauk (Canada 1945)

Flute Quintet (2003)

Alex Pauk is a prominent and influential conductor/composer on the Canadian music scene with a growing international profile. He is also a leading figure in the field of film music scoring, conducting and production. In 1999, he received the Musician of the Year award from The Toronto Musicians' Association.

In 1983, he founded Toronto's award-winning Esprit Orchestra and continues to develop Esprit as a concert organization, and an orchestra involved with film, television, music theatre, visual arts, dance, CD and DVD recording and multimedia events.

Pauk has been engaged to write music for all the above-mentioned disciplines in addition to being commissioned to compose music for every type of musical ensemble. The scope of his music composition for film covers a wide range of styles and genres. In 2002, he and his film-composing partner, his wife Alexina Louie, won the prestigious Louis Applebaum award for excellence in musical composition for a wide array of films.

Flute Quintet

The "Flute Quintet" represents a departure from the style of other recent works of mine in that it is not programmatic but rather focuses entirely on aspects of its formal structures. In three movements, the piece is actually a flute concerto in miniature. It is "minimalist" in that each movement relies on one or two simple concepts that in themselves utilize a very limited number of compositional materials.

The first movement begins with the flute, violins and viola combining and playing off one another in a rippling, effervescent motif which is underpinned by the cello playing a distinctly different kind of material which, nevertheless, binds the players together. A more lyrical coda links to the mood and nature of the last movement and helps create a sense of ABA form (slow, fast, slow) for the quintet.

The second movement demands that the “soloist” plays a vigorous, high speed, non-stop barrage of tricky cellular patterns almost without taking a breath. The pure line is traced and enhanced by the first violin part while the other instruments add to the mix playing jagged, piercing chords.

More romantic in nature, the last movement has string chords building on the melodies of the pure line, then dissolving in and out of each other as though temporary in nature compared to the pure material. The Flute Quintet is dedicated to Robert Aitken, a friend and colleague with whom I’ve shared many musical paths.

- Alex Pauk

Gabriela Ortiz (Mexico 1964)

La Calaca (finale from Altar de Muertos) (2001)

Gabriela Ortiz Torres was born in Mexico City, where she studied composition with Mario Lavista at the National Conservatory of Music, and Federico Ibarra at the National University of Mexico. In 1990 she was awarded The British Council Fellowship to study in London with Robert Saxton at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama. In 1992 she received the University of Mexico Scholarship to complete Ph.D. studies in electroacoustic music composition with Simon Emmerson at The City University in London. She currently teaches composition at the Mexican University of Mexico City. Her music has been broadcast by the BBC (UK), National Radio of Spain, Swedish Radio, and Mexican Radio and Television, and can be heard on some labels such as Cenidim (Mexico), Dorian Recordings (USA.) Urtext Classics and Quindecim recordings. Her music is currently published by Universal Edition.

She is considered one of the best young Mexican composers that have been focused towards being able to build a personal musical language that could be based on musical tradition and the avant-garde; that could combine high art, folk music or jazz in novel, sometimes precious and especially personal ways; and that it could be both entertaining and immediate as well as profound and sophisticated; in her music she achieves a balance of highly organised structure and improvisatory spontaneity.

Altar de Muertos Written for the Kronos Quartet and dedicated to the memory of those close to them.

The tradition of the Day of the Dead festivities in Mexico is the source of inspiration for the creation of a work for string quartet whose ideas could reflect the internal search between the real and the magic, a duality always present in Mexican culture, from the past to this present.

Altar de Muertos is divided into four parts, each of these describe diverse moods, traditions and the spiritual worlds which shape to the global concept of death in Mexico, plus my own personal concept of death.

Fourth part: La Calaca

Syncretism and the concept of death in modern Mexico, chaos and the richness of multiple symbols, where the duality of life is always present: sacred and profane; good and evil; night and day; joy and sorrow. This movement reflects a musical world full of joy, vitality and a great expressive force.

At the end of “La Calaca” I decided to quote a melody of Huichol origin, which attracted me when I first heard it. That melody was sung by Familia de la Cruz. The Huichol culture lives in the State of Nayarit, Mexico. Their musical art is always found in ceremonial and ritual life.

- Gabriela Ortiz

Diego Luzuriaga (Ecuador 1955)

Yaravi & Yumbo (2003) | Estreno Mundial (2002/3)

Ecuadorian Diego Luzuriaga is one of the most original voices among Latin American composers. The force and uniqueness of his music spring mainly from his Andean folk melodies, the use of French post-impressionistic sound color, and from his unapologetic South American lyricism.

He was born in 1955, in Loja, a small agricultural Ecuadorian town, into a family of twelve children. He studied in Paris at the Paris Ecole Normale and later at Manhattan School of Music and Columbia University in New York. He has been taught by, among others, Gerardo Guevara, Yoshihisa Taira and Mesias Maiguashca.

He has received several international awards, including, in 1993, the Guggenheim Fellowship from New York. His music is regularly performed in numerous international events. The recent recording of “Once Canciones de Diego Luzuriaga” was released by soprano Dana Hanchard in New York and is receiving rave reviews. He now freelances in Philadelphia, USA, where he lives with his wife and three children.

YARAVI & YUMBO

for flute (doubling alto flute) and string quartet

Yaravi is a music genre sung and played by Indians and Mestizos in the Ecuadorian Andes, characterized by a slow, pentatonic, prayer-like melody. Yaravi is said to come from the southern Inca Civilization several centuries ago, where it was played as religious music. (In Ecuador it is still often used in religious contexts).

I called the first movement of this piece “Yaravi” because when I was composing it, I realized that with its sad, slow, repetitive character I was unwittingly invoking the folk Yaravi genre of my country. This Yaravi is, therefore, a nostalgic, unconscious trip back to my culture, rather than a true, folk Yaravi with its real rhythmic patterns, pentatonic melodies and music textures.

Yumbo is a dance practiced by Ecuadorian Indians. Written in six-eight meter, it is lively and fast in character. My Yumbo (second movement of the piece) - while keeping the six eight meter - tries to venture into some “foreign” asymmetric rhythms. The melodies are modal, although not necessarily pentatonic (unlike the original folk yumbos).

This piece is dedicated to Robert Aitken and the Cuarteto Latinoamericano, and is a commission by New Music Concerts of Toronto. It was premiered in Pittsburgh in January 2003.

ESTRENO MUNDIAL

for flutist (who also delivers a text) and string quartet.

I have been present at the premieres of many of my pieces, and I have experienced my share of the anticipation, stress, and thrill. It is indeed a rich and unique feeling for the composer - and, ideally, for the public — to witness the intensity of a piece being delivered for the first time.

It occurs to me, however, that any performance can offer its share of such feelings. Just to see the players who, like shamans, convert a few notations into music, can evoke a sense of genesis and magic, whether the piece is a premiere or not.

Furthermore, I have slowly come to the belief (not original, I realize) that not only any performance, but any event - social or private, long or short, sacred or mundane - can be so intensely in the present, so bright and deep, that it becomes transcendent. The idea of living a life that is nothing less than a series of transcendent moments, a series of “world premieres,” appeals to me.

Estreno Mundial (Spanish for “world premiere”) aims to elucidate these ideas, and is dedicated to New Music Concerts of Toronto and its director, my friend, Bob Aitken.

- Diego Luzuriaga

33rd season | 274th event

Sunday February 1, 2004 · 8:00 pm

Co-presented with Goethe-Institut Toronto

Photo: Ralf Gerard

Mauricio Kagel

Glenn Gould Studio

Guest Composer/Conductor: **Mauricio Kagel**

Guest Artists: **Elmer Iseler Singers**

New Music Concerts Ensemble

Robert Aitken, artistic director

Mauricio Kagel (Argentina/Germany 1931)

Schwarzes Madrigal for ensemble and choir (1998-99)*

Anita McAlister, trumpet · J. Scott Irvine, tuba

Trevor Tureski and Ryan Scott, percussion

Elmer Iseler Singers · Lydia Adams, conductor

Burleske for saxophone and mixed choir (1999-2000)*

Elmer Iseler Singers · Wallace Halladay, baritone saxophone

Lydia Adams, conductor

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Mauricio Kagel, conductor

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MAURICIO KAGEL

by **Austin Clarkson**

Trying to capture the essence of the creative life of Mauricio Kagel is like wrestling with Proteus. But it doesn't matter if at the end one's not blessed with ultimate truth. Traveling through Kagel's fantastical domain is its own reward. The celebrated Canadian composer Istvan Anhalt drew a thumbnail sketch of Kagel in his path-breaking book on "alternative" musics for the voice composed after World War II. He said:

Kagel has developed into the most imaginatively, consistently, and absurdly satirical and productive composer in Europe. Who are the tenants in his house of many echoes, distorting yet truth-telling mirrors, and spotlights? The list includes an organist who, playing or silent, coughs, laughs, whistles, shouts, and claps (*Improvisation ajoutée*, 1961-2); a lady harpsichordist who absent-mindedly plays Chopin- and Bach-like fragments over and over, while vocalizing a word-salad in a *Sprechgesang* (*Rezitativarié*, 1973); an anonymous singer-speaker who is on the point of losing his voice (and perhaps his sanity), and who also acts as a ventriloquist, a mime, and an impersonator (*Phonophonie*, 1963-4); singer-speakers in a choral piece who also blow into organ pipes and utter or sing a text in a semblance of pidgin Latin in a spiritless and mindless mock-liturgical routine (*Hallelujah für Stimmen*, 1967-8); and the vocalists in his absurd opera, *Staatstheater* (1967-70), representatives of classical operatic roles: the Queen of the Night, Aida, Carmen, Erda, Ottavio, and others, singing in caricatures of the respective idioms, using pseudo-texts of nonsense words, coined with considerable combinational inventiveness.

(*Alternative Voices: Essays on Contemporary Vocal and Choral Composition*, 1984)

Twenty years on, Kagel's seismic productivity continues unabated. Taking all of culture as his theatre of operations, his scalpel is as keen as ever. He continues to take enormous risks, the kind Morton Feldman meant when he said: "There is that doctor who opens you up, does exactly the right thing, closes you up - you die. He failed to take the chance that might have saved you. Art is a crucial, dangerous operation we perform on ourselves. Unless we take a chance, we die in art." Like Feldman, Kagel works with images rather than concepts. He avoids what Theodor Adorno calls "identity-thinking" (this is 'modern,' that is 'postmodern') and addresses issues with a dialectic of images. The breathtaking profusion of Kagel's music-theatrical events shock and delight, surprise and alarm, puzzle and confuse. They insist that we postpone understanding until after undergoing them. If we listen by the seat of our pants, we'll stay close to ground zero of aesthetic experience.

Burleske, for baritone saxophone and mixed choir, is a richly evocative scape of vocalizations and instrumental sounds. Saxophonist and singers combine to form a unique instrument powered by breath and body-percussion of every imaginable sort. From the mosaic of images emerges a virtual drama in which the protagonists are shapes, textures, and timbres, some in sympathy and some divergent. The piece closes with a theatrical image. After sounds of kissing, humming, and in-breaths, the singers and saxophone whisper "Abracadabra," and then !

Schwarzes Madrigal (Black Madrigal) was commissioned by the city of Berlin for the year 2000. Kagel draws the vocal material from the names of African towns and villages, and a few German words - “wo” (where), “in,” “ja,” “nein,” “und,” “nach” (to), “wohin” (whither). Kagel is not concerned to have the choir pronounce the names according to the respective African languages. In the preface of the score he writes, “My own attitude to the ‘correctness’ of the interpretation is something that I have tried to clarify in the very first bars. Here the word ‘Timbuktu’ occurs several times, and each time the stress is differently placed.” The conductor and singers of each choir in whatever country must decide on a particular pronunciation. Kagel’s inventive play with African place names is in tune with practice in parts of Africa where musicians not only perform music but create words. These poet-musicians take their lead from the intonation of words, so their songs and dances are rhythmic unfoldings of words. The choir is joined by trumpet, tuba, and two percussionists with many instruments of African origin - marimba, log drum, tomtoms, bells, sanzas, gourds, maracas, guiros, coconut shells. Though the piece does not quote African music as such, it is the confrontation of a European with the globally-immanent fact of Africa.

It begins, “Where? In Timbuktu? Yes. In Timbuktu.” The hushed voices evoke the magic and mystery of sounding names. The tone-drama unfolds in passages of joyful playfulness and hushed wonder, searing violence and deep mourning. Interludes for brass and percussion heighten the drama. As the piece ends, the question is unresolved: “To Timbuktu! Whither? Timbuktu? Yes. Timbuktu. Where?”

Kagel boxes the compass with these eight pieces for “salon orchestra” - Die Stücke der Windrose (The Pieces of the Compass). Where do we get our ideas of the directions? From geography, culture, politics, travels? As a youth in Argentina, Kagel’s South was the Antarctic and his North was the tropics. As a European the meanings are reversed. Each of the eight directions is rich with associations - an intriguing interplay of personal and collective meanings. The compass locates where one is here and now. West and North, the last two pieces of the set, complete his project of circumscribing the virtual centre.

A “salon orchestra” provides generic background music for relaxing afternoons in palm courts. But Kagel’s dialectics transforms the background into the site of reverie from which emerges the foreground of vivid encounter. To the core instrumentation of clarinet, piano, harmonium, and string quintet Kagel adds percussion instruments that vary according to the point of the compass.

For West the percussion evokes the intermingling of Africa and America. It is a place of introspection and dreamy intimacy interspersed with jazzy scenes of frenetic hilarity. The piece closes with the percussionist chopping at a piece of tree trunk with an axe while the other musicians move their heads back and forth in unison. These pregnant actions abruptly splice the music with traces of . . . ecocide? genocide? or simply dada?

The percussion section of North, in addition to drums, calls for suspended metal sheets, pebbles in a shallow wooden box and in bowls, pieces of crumpled cellophane, an anvil, a piece of polystyrene, a tree branch with dried leaves, and an electric fan standing on the bass drum. Sounds of the barren tundra, arctic shores, remorseless weather. Absence of human agency, save perhaps for the wistful tinkle of a muted sleigh bell. The gathering and scattering actions diverge and intensify. The closing image of string tremolos (the wind), the shaking branch, the humming fan, culminates with the musicians looking upward to the Zenith, the Pole Star to which the compass ultimately points.

Kagel’s detailed instructions for performing these actions insist that they not be taken lightly. The percussionist is instructed to break the pieces of polystyrene, “almost like a religious ritual.” Kagel’s genius is to graft the banal onto the primordial. Polystyrene becomes the instrument of a riveting ritual action.

*Austin Clarkson is president of New Music Concerts. He edited *On the Music of Stefan Wolpe: Essays and Recollections* (Pendragon Press, 2003) and recently received an ASCAP Deems Taylor Award.*

BIOGRAPHIES

Mauricio Kagel

Born in Buenos Aires in 1931 and living in Germany since 1957, Mauricio Kagel is among the most distinctive composers of contemporary music. From the very beginning his name has been associated above all with music theatre, the genre in which he has perhaps exerted the greatest impact. Besides his radical innovations in this area, however, he has also developed a highly personal aesthetic in his absolute music. Imagination, originality and humour are the hallmarks of this multimedia artist. With inexhaustible powers of invention, Kagel makes use of a very wide array of expressive devices which, although often highly provocative, are always placed in the service of musical discourse. Kagel's creative output has been enormous. It encompasses not only stage, orchestral and chamber music in an extremely wide range of instrumental settings, but also film scores, radio plays and essays. Mauricio Kagel has presented, and continues to present compositions that seem to come from an inexhaustible spring of ideas, suggesting a phenomenal imaginative power. This multi-disciplinary perspective is probably the primary reason he has created such a wide variety of works, including films, plays, and puppet shows, and any number of multi-media compositions. It is also true that Kagel has brought into use new means of producing and structuring sounds. Indeed, his work suggests an enlarged understanding of the concept of 'music', an understanding which not only covers all sounds, but also phenomena of motion or visual effect. The dynamic nature of his compositions and the way he reflects the work of other artists in his own suggests a man with a deep interest in all the arts, and a commitment to a true exploration of his media. Although much of his work has a humourous exterior, it is as often as not underlined by a dialectically dark detachment.

Lydia Adams

Lydia Adams, one of Canada's most distinguished conductors, was appointed Artistic Director and Conductor of the Elmer Iseler Singers in 1998. Under her direction, the choir has received rave reviews for their Toronto concert series and for their extensive touring performances through the U.S. and Canada. She has had the distinct honour, along with the choir, of recording choral music of Canadians Harry Somers and Louis Applebaum in commemorative albums. Recently released is the choral music of Christos Hatzis. She is also embarking on other exciting recording projects including the music of John Burge, Srul Irving Glick and Harry Freedman.

In recent seasons, Ms. Adams and the Elmer Iseler Singers have toured Northern Ontario, the United States, Western Canada and Atlantic Canada presenting more than 90 performances and workshops. Ms. Adams has been the recipient of numerous awards including the 2002 Charles Frederick Allison Award, the Mount Alison University Distinguished Alumni Award. In celebration of her exceptional contribution to music in Canada, Lydia Adams received an Honorary Doctor of Music from Mount Alison University in 2003 at an impressive ceremony in Sackville, New Brunswick. In addition to conducting the Elmer Iseler Singers, Ms. Adams conducts the Amadeus Choir of Toronto and is a widely sought guest conductor and clinician.

Elmer Iseler Singers

The Elmer Iseler Singers, under the baton of Lydia Adams, is a twenty-voice professional chamber choir based in Toronto. It has built an enviable international reputation since its debut performance in 1979. In 2004, it celebrates its 25th Anniversary and as the successor of the Festival Singers of Canada, it marks the 50th Anniversary of professional choral singing in Canada.

With repertoire that spans 500 years of choral music, the Elmer Iseler Singers are acclaimed for their flawless technique and wide interpretive range. The choir has appeared at several national and international festivals

and is best known for its fostering and premiering the works of contemporary Canadian composers in live performances and it extends this work through frequent radio and television broadcasts and a variety of recording projects. The Singers are the professional Choir In Residence at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music.

Wallace Halladay

Hailed as “one of Canada’s leading performers of contemporary music,” saxophonist Wallace Halladay has premiered numerous works for his instrument. He holds a Bachelor’s degree from the University of Toronto Faculty of Music in Performance and Composition and a Master’s from New England Conservatory in Boston, studying under Kenneth Radnofsky. Wallace has performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and as a fellow of the Tanglewood Music Centre. He has performed in Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia, with broadcasts on the CBC, WGBH (Boston) and Radio Nederland. As soloist, he has performed the concerti of Ibert, Husa, Scelsi, Colgrass and Donatoni. Wallace is currently recording the two saxophone Sequenzas of Luciano Berio for the NAXOS label.

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Co-presented with The Music Gallery at St. George the Martyr

The B.E.A.M.

Live Electroacoustics from Switzerland

The Music Gallery at St. George the Martyr

Basel Electric Art Messengers

Sylvia Nopper, soprano · **Matthias Wuersch**, percussion

Wolfgang Heiniger electronics and percussion

Thomas Kessler electronics and diffusion

Thomas Kessler (Switzerland 1937)

Dichterlesung (2002) for 3 Performers

Wolfgang Heiniger (Switzerland 1964)

Scannings(2002) for voice, percussion,
live electronics (and video projection)

Georges Aperghis (Greece/France 1945)

Le Corps à corps (1982)

for solo percussion

Cléo Palacio-Quintin (Canada 1971)

Le chant des nébuleuses ** (2004)

*Canadian work | ** World premiere | *** Canadian premiere

Basically, the BEAM is a experimental band, which means that we do not play any “repertoire” pieces (with some little exceptions) but only commissions. Since all the musicians are well known in their field in Switzerland and Central Europe, you might consider the BEAM as a “soloist-ensemble” or a kind of “all-star-band” that takes the liberty and privilege to play only what they want. We do not play very often and concentrate on special events and programs. Our commitment and goal is to explore the live-electronic and theatric potential of chamber music. So you will find in our repertoire pieces that are played only on and with turntables, videocameras, motors, dishes etc.

The specialty of the BEAM is that we try to break the usual composer-performer relationship in the way that we change and sometimes even recompose some of the pieces from concert to concert in close collaboration with the composer. Since two of us are composers as well we understand our shows as “works in progress”. It is not only our goal to tour to foreign countries and cultures but to interact with them. Most of the tours are accompanied by lectures and workshops in which we present our work and try to learn from the audience as well as they might learn from us. The BEAM is presently the only active ensemble that combines theatre, music and advanced live-electronics, and one of the few ensembles that where chosen by the Swiss governmental board PRO HELVETIA to act as “cultural ambassadors”.

-Thomas Kessler

Thomas Kessler was born in 1937 in Zürich. He studied German and Romanic linguistics at the Universities of Zürich and Paris. He studied composition with Heinz Friedrich Hartig, Ernst Pepping and Boris Blacher in Berlin, and founded his own electronic studio there in 1965. In the following years he was director of Berlin Electronic Beat Studio and musical director of the Centre Universitaire International de Formation et de Recherche Dramatiques at Nancy, France. From 1973 to 2000 he taught composition and theory at the Basel Music Academy and established the well-known electronic studio there. As a composer of numerous instrumental chamber music, orchestral music and live-electronic music compositions he is most interested in the interactions between musicians and electronics. Thomas Kessler lives in Basel and Toronto.

Wolfgang Heiniger was born in 1964 in Basel. He graduated as percussionist at the Musikhochschule Basel and later studied electronic music and composition with Thomas Kessler. In 1991/92 he was as a guest composer at the computer music center at Stanford University (CCRMA). He writes primarily works for live electronics and computer music but also chamber music and for stage and film. Apart from his educational activity as professor of Audio Design at the electronic studio of the Musikhochschule Basel, he also tours as a performer of live electronic music.

The German soprano **Sylvia Nopper** finished her vocal studies at the Musikhochschule Basel, earning a masters degree as a soloist. During her studies, she won first prize in the Swiss Othmar Schoeck Competition. Her repertory spans several centuries with special emphasis on contemporary works through which she has established her good reputation. She has had many works written especially for her and premiered many others. Sylvia Nopper has participated in festivals all over the world and worked, among others, with Heinz Holliger, Jürg Wyttenbach, Detlev Müller-Siemens, Ensemble Contrechamps, Klangforum Wien, ensemble recherche and the B.E.A.M.

The percussionist, cymbalonist and Glassharmonica player **Matthias Würsch** graduated from the Musikhochschule Basel with a masters degree as a soloist and continued his studies in Paris. He performs frequently in numerous festivals and broadcasts, as a member of distinguished ensembles including the Basler Kammerensemble, the ensemble recherche, and as a soloist. His special interest in the Glassharmonica and the Hungarian Cymbalon has led to concerts with orchestras including the Orchestre National de France, the NDR Rundfunkorchester and the Orchestre de Paris. In 1996 he was distinguished with the music prize of the Swiss canton of Basel-Landschaft. Apart from his concert activities Matthias Würsch also dedicates himself intensively to the possibilities of theatrical expression.

Rudolf Kelterborn (Switzerland 1931)

Erinnerungen an Shakespeare (1999)

Rudolf Kelterborn was born in 1931 in Basel, Switzerland. After finishing his studies at the Musik-Akademie der Stadt Basel (theory, composition and conducting), he continued studying with composers Günter Bialas and Wolfgang Fortner as well as the conductor Igor Markevitch. He has taught at academies in Basel, Detmold, Zürich and Karlsruhe, and from 1974-1980 was the head of the Music Division of the Swiss German Broadcasting Corporation. He also served as the chief-editor of the Swiss Music Review from 1969-1975. Since 1987 he has been responsible, together with Heinz Holliger and Jürg Wyttenbach, for the programming of the Basler Musik Forum (orchestral concerts with unconventional programs).

Kelterborn's compositional work, which was awarded several prizes (among others the "composer's prize" of the Association of Swiss Musicians and the "Kunstpreis" of the City of Basel, both in 1984), comprises all

musical genres and has come to international attention with performances throughout Europe and North America. He is also active as a conductor, especially of his own works, has published theoretical and analytical essays and articles and has been a guest lecturer in the USA, Great Britain, China and Japan.

Erinnerungen an Shakespeare (1999) is Kelterborn's settings of passages of Juliet and Ophelia for soprano, two percussionists and live electronics.

Cléo Palacio-Quintin (Canada 1971)

Le chant des nébuleuses (world premiere) (2004)

Cléo Palacio-Quintin grew up in the province of Québec and studied music at the Université de Montréal where she completed a Masters degree in Flute Performance specializing in contemporary music (1997). Her previous studies included different styles of music (classical, pop and jazz) and her work in the fields of music analysis and ethnomusicology has been a great influence on her musical development. She did several performance courses with Robert Dick, and composition courses at the CEAMC (Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Musica Contemporánea, Buenos Aires 1997), IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Création Acoustique/Musique, Paris 1999) and Dartington International School of Music (1999). In 1998-1999, she was supported by the FCAR (Fond pour les Chercheurs et l'Avancement de la Recherche, Québec) to study flute performance with Anne LaBerge and to work on new compositions in Amsterdam. She has lived in Holland, where she was very active as a performer/improviser/composer and attended the Institute of Sonology of the Royal Conservatory in Den Haag in order to extend her flute playing and compositional work with live-electronics. She developed the Hyper-Flute, installing a system of electronic controllers enabling the sending of data to a computer in real time. The acoustic sound of the flute can then be processed by the computer which is always under the control of her hands. Her creative activities have been supported by the Canada Council and the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

Le chant des nébuleuses

We owe our existence to the infinity of the heavens.

- Hubert Reeves, astrophysicist

For the past several years the celebrated Hubble telescope has revealed to us the astonishing forms and colors of the Nebulas, celestial bodies formed from clusters of stars and clouds of gases. Inspired by the writings of Hubert Reeves on the infinite cosmos which surrounds us, and in collaboration with the author Jessica Vigneault, I present to you the souls of a few of these superb nebulas.

Nébuleuse Trifide

The Trifide nebula is a brilliant diffuse nebula made up of interstellar clouds of hydrogen which radiate due to the intense hot star emission located inside (red emission) and the clouds of gas and of dust which reflect the light from nearby stars (blue reflection).

Nébuleuse de la Lyre

The Quadrant nebula is a planetary nebula, formed during the last moments of the life of a star, when a red giant expels its external layers in a process which results in a dwarf white star.

Nébuleuse du Crabe

The Crab nebula was formed from the debris of a Supernova, a supermassive star which ended its life in an explosion in 1054, ejecting all its peripheral layers into space.

This piece was composed for The BEAM (Basel Electric Art Messengers) as part of the series Voyages Basel-Montréal organized by Concerts M. It was commissioned with the support of the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. The work is dedicated to Ziya Tabassian, superb interpreter of the ombak drum and an invaluable collaborator without whom this work would not have been possible.

Georges Aperghis (Greece 1945)

Le Corps a Corps (1981) for solo percussionist and his Zarb

Georges Aperghis was born in Athens, Greece in 1945. In 1964 he studied composition privately with Yannis Papaioannou and pursued other independent musical studies. Apart from a collection of works for orchestral and chamber groups, Aperghis has devoted a large portion of his efforts to musical theatre. His works have been presented at the Avignon Festival, the Bagnolet Festival, the Opéra Comique, Lyons Opéra and at the Strasbourg National Theatre. In 1976 he assisted in the founding of l'Atelier Théâtre et Musique (a theatre and music workshop). Aperghis envisions "everyday life as an immense score". Through research this ensemble has managed to construct "a repertoire of systems - of musical machines capable of commanding in a certain way different daily life fragments and to make them say things which normally one keeps to oneself."

Their resulting "spectacles" are "often based on simple things given which we use afterwards as musical themes. That which interests us are the interferences, annex and furtive stories, the sounds that accompany such and such an event, false tracks, in brief the capricious but controlled narration of the form."

Le Corps à Corps, for a percussionist and his Zarb (African drum), dates from 1979 and is dedicated to Jean-Pierre Drouet (who performed it for New Music Concerts in 1991). It is written in three sections, the last proceeding without pause:

I. Ouverture - II. Le Récit - III. La Lutte ("struggle"). The first part opens in an action-packed manner with sporting interplay between the percussionist and his instrument. After a brief hiatus the "Récit" section begins with incredible additive vocalizations, frequently punctuated by commentary and gesture. The battle heats up to a final, animated encounter as the match explodes.

Wolfgang Heiniger (Switzerland 1964)

Scannings (2002)

The most surprising instrument used in Scannings is a little web cam. Its pictures are analyzed and control sound generation. Those who look closely will also see that the arm of the percussionist is turned into an instrument by means of a sensor. Scannings is a visual piece as well. It's about the difference of seeing a sound and hearing it.

Thomas Kessler (Switzerland 1937)

Dichterlesung (2002)

Dichterlesung (Poetry Reading) was composed in the winter of 2001-02 for the B.E.A.M.. It is a musical

exploration of the relationships between computer generated voice synthesis and the human act of reading.

Even reading silently, we react to the book we are reading. We become involved in the progress of the work and hear in our minds the sonic inflections that correspond to the emotions of the text.

A computer, though capable of translating text to speech, cannot yet understand the context of words or respond to them with the appropriate vocal inflections. If, for example, we place a question mark after the word "singing", the best it can do is to raise the pitch of the final syllable to suggest that a question is being asked.

Voice synthesis programs are being developed that may someday eliminate the need for literacy. It may be premature to speculate whether they will have the same impact as Gutenberg's printing press. However, they will undoubtedly have a profound impact on the nature of our reading and listening. It remains to be seen if the neutral tone of voice synthesis will ever equal the drama of a reading by a poet of his own work.

Dichterlesung includes excerpts from the literature of Samuel Beckett, John Cage, the Koran, Milan Kundera, Murray Schafer, Saul Williams and others. MSP software design by Wolfgang Heiniger.

33rd season | 276th event

Sunday March 7, 2004 · 8:00 pm

Co-presented with Two New Hours on CBC Radio Two

A Sacred Place

The Music Gallery at St. George the Martyr

New Music Concerts Ensemble

Robert Aitken, conductor

Programme:

Daniel Foley (b. 1952) | Souvenances (2003)

1. Sunshowers | 2. Ikan-finoka | 3. Minstrels

Commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation · World premiere

Robert Aitken, flute | Max Christie, clarinet | Fujiko Imajishi, violin

Peter Pavlovsky, contrabass | David Swan, piano

Barbara Croall (b. 1966)

If there be butterflies all around (2003-2004)

Commissioned by the Ontario Arts Council · World premiere

Douglas Stewart & Dianne Aitken, flutes | Max Christie, clarinet

Fujiko Imajishi, violin | Bev Spotton, viola | David Hetherington, cello

Sanya Eng, harp | Richard Moore, hackbrett | Robert Aitken, conductor

Ann Southam (b. 1937) | Rivers: Book 3, No. 8 (1981)

Christina Petrowska-Quilico, piano

Juhan Puhm (b. 1964) | Northern Songs (2001)

Commissioned by The Canada Council · World Premiere

Douglas Stewart & Dianne Aitken, flutes | Fujiko Imajishi, violin

David Hetherington, cello | Richard Moore, cimbalon

Trevor Tureski & Rick Sacks, percussion | Sanya Eng, harp

David Swan, chamber organ | Robert Aitken, conductor

Tonight's concert is being recorded for broadcast on 11 April, 2004 by Two New Hours on CBC Radio Two, Canada's national new music show, with host Larry Lake.

Presented with the generous support of Roger D. Moore

Daniel Foley

Daniel Foley was born in Toronto in 1952. He is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts, where his principal teacher was Dr. Robert Ward. In 1976 he returned to Canada to pursue graduate studies at the University of Toronto under the supervision of John Weinzweig and Lothar Klein. He also attended The Banff Centre for additional studies with Serge Garant, Bruce Mather and Gilles Tremblay. In the 1980s Foley taught at the University of Guelph, where he developed an interest in ethnomusicology. In addition to composing, Mr. Foley is the program editor, art designer and webmaster for New Music Concerts, a professional music copyist, editor and arranger, and a regular contributor to Toronto's WholeNote magazine.

Souvenances Op. 50 (2003)
programme note by Daniel Foley

In 1960 my recently divorced mother left Toronto with her two children to join her father in Jacksonville, Florida. Situated at the extreme northeast corner of the state, "Jax" then was a racially segregated society, a steamy, bigoted bastion of the bygone Confederate States of America. The decade I spent there was marked by a hurricane of social change and shrouded in the specious menace of Communism. It was in this hallowed, mutinous land that I too rebelled and found my calling to become a musician.

1. Sunshowers

The sunny skies of Florida are peppered by scudding clouds that drift across the featureless terrain, periodically releasing ephemeral showers. The high tessitura and acrid textures of Sunshowers suggest an atmosphere of heat and humidity, punctuated with the memory of Northern bird calls and despondent train signals.

2. Ikan-finoka

An hour's drive northwest of Jacksonville lies the enormous quagmire the Creek people named Ikan-finoka, the Quivering Earth. Commonly known as the Okefenokee swamp, its spongy soil and tannic waters teem with primordial life. In the evenings there comes a sense of dread, expressed here as a cabalistic incantation in the form of a passacaglia.

3. Minstrels

In Minstrels I adopt the zany vernacular of the slack-jawed yokel, in an affectionate burlesque of the Hillbilly harmonies favoured in them there parts. Painstakingly crafted from old bones, bottles and cotton bales left over from the Civil War, these Dixie maladies evoke, in the words of Foley aficionado Ernesto Ferreri, a world of "fiyar ants a-marchin', clogs a-stompin', and fiddles a-sawin'. The American is more than pastiched, it is derided, thrown into the stew to reveal a certain homeliness as the stirring spoon brings it around once again."

Souvenances was commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and is dedicated to that steadfast and cherished confederate of contemporary music, Robert Aitken.

Barbara Croall

A Canadian and Odawa, composer Barbara Croall is active internationally, with works performed in several European countries, Britain and Canada in recent years.

She is a graduate of the Hochschule für Musik in Munich, Germany and holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Toronto where she was the recipient of the Glenn Gould Award in Composition in 1989. From 1993 to 1996 she was a theory and composition student of Dr. Samuel Dolin (1917-2002), whom she regards as one of the most important influences in her classical training. Barbara has been a participant in composition seminars with Sir Peter Maxwell-Davies and Robert Saxton (Course for Young Composers with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Island of Hoy, Scotland), and Helmut Lachenmann (Centre Acanthes, France), and in workshops with the Composers' Orchestra under the direction of Gary Kulesha. From 1998 to 2000 Barbara was composer-in-residence/affiliate composer with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Most recently Barbara was composer-in-residence at the St. Norbert Arts Centre where her site-specific

outdoor multi-media theatre work based on the Seven Sacred Anishinaabe Grandfather Teachings - The Meeting Point of the Seven (2002) - was performed. Apart from playing, performing and composing on the traditional native flute and singing in traditional ceremonies, Barbara also composes for instruments of the European classical and folk traditions. The diversity in her compositional approach reflects her interest in working with the wider ranges of inherent sounds that all instruments from around the world produce naturally and finding personal expression through that creative process. Many of her works confront the post-assimilation reality of aboriginal identity through recovery and reflection. Other works are influenced by her studies, travels and experiences abroad.

If there be butterflies all around (2003-2004)
programme note by Barbara Croall

When I was fourteen, spending the summer on the Manitoulin Island as our family did and still does every year, I decided to go for a long stroll through the back woods and meadows where my mom was born and raised. It was Labour Day weekend, the sun a warm yellow and the hint of the coming fall in the breezes through the poplar trees.

My memory of that occasion is still very vivid to me now. One of the longest walks I had ever taken over the span of that entire afternoon until dusk, I simply followed a very old trail which lead through woods and fields. As the breezes died down and the sun began to settle along the horizon, I was growing tired but was still compelled for some unknown reason to keep walking.

Just as I came out from under a canopy of trees, there before me was a meadow of milkweeds covered in countless monarch butterflies. I had never seen such a sight - the entire field was a sea of orange as these beautiful creatures grazed sleepily while very slowly opening and closing their wings. It was more like a vision from a dream.

I stepped forward to edge of the meadow, bent down and very carefully coaxed some sleepy butterflies onto my hand. They barely fluttered at all, seeming to trust me, and so I then proceeded to place them gently on my arms, shoulders and hair. It didn't seem like a silly thing to do - even for a teenager. They just clung onto my sweater and strands of hair, seeming not to be bothered at all.

As the sun continued to lower, I decided to journey back to the cabin. I gently placed each butterfly back on the milkweeds and returned home, feeling the lingering sense of awe and enchantment. I later told my parents what I had seen and my mother just smiled with this knowing look on her face.

Many years ago my mother told me how many of our relatives going back many generations had been buried nearby in different locations, but she was reluctant to tell me exactly where these were. In 2000, when I was up at the cabin for another summer to compose some music, an old man who knew my grandfather came by unexpectedly wanting to show me where those burial sites are. One site was located just adjacent to the meadow where I had seen the monarchs and I wondered whether this was purely a coincidence.

Relaying the sighting of the butterflies to an elder recently, he also smiled - just like my mother did - and explained that the spirits of our ancestors come back to visit us in many different forms - in this case, as butterflies... to hold a gathering on their ancestral land.

When I was very young my mother used to sing a lullaby in Ojibwe/Odawa to me, which her father used to sing to her. She recalled how when she was forced by the RCMP to attend residential school far away from home as a child, what comforted her in her loneliness was singing this song to herself. In honour of her, this song comes through in various guises in this musical work.

Ann Southam

After completing musical studies at the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory of Music in the mid-1960s, Ann Southam began a teaching and composing career which has included a long and productive association with modern dance. As well as creating music for some of Canada's major modern dance companies and choreographers including The Toronto Dance Theatre, Danny Grossman, Dancemakers, Patricia Beatty, Christopher House and Rachel Browne, she has been an instructor in electronic music at the Royal Conservatory and has also participated in many "composer in the classroom" programs in elementary and high schools. While a great deal of her work has been electroacoustic music on tape, she has in recent years become increasingly interested in music for acoustic instruments. She has composed concert music for a variety of instruments and ensembles, working with such artists as Eve Egoyan, Beverley Johnston, Arraymusic and Contact contemporary music. In 1986 New Music Concerts commissioned and premiered Quintet for Piano and Strings performed by Marc Widner and Accordes. Ann Southam's work has been commissioned through the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council and the CBC, and has been performed in Canada, Europe and the United States. She is a member of the Canadian Music Centre, the Canadian League of Composers and a founding member of the Association of Canadian Women Composers.

Rivers: Book 3, No. 8 (1981)

Virtuosic in the tradition of Chopin and Liszt, Rivers is a large collection of related pieces for solo piano. The section performed tonight requires crisp articulation on the part of the pianist to bring out the harmonic changes within continuous rhythmic patterns. With the composer's consent Ms Petrowska Quilico plays the work much faster than in the original score. This accelerated tempo keeps the performer "on edge" while providing the listener with an aural waterfall, effectively calming and exhilarating at the same time.

Born in Ottawa, Christina Petrowska Quilico studied with Boris Berlin at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, where she made her orchestral concert debut at age 10. She received a scholarship to study at New York's Juilliard School as a student of Rosina Lhévinne, Jeaneane Dowis and Irwin Freundlich and at fourteen made her New York concert debut at New York's Town Hall. After graduation, she studied at the Sorbonne in Paris and later in Darmstadt and Berlin with Karlheinz Stockhausen and György Ligeti. From 1962 to 1980, Petrowska Quilico lived in New York City, where she performed extensively. In 1971, she married her first husband, Quebec composer Michel-Georges Brégent (1948-1993). As a couple, they were extremely active in New Music circles in Canada and in Europe throughout the 1970s and early 1980s.

Petrowska Quilico has recorded 16 CDs as a soloist, with orchestra, and in chamber ensembles, including two in partnership with her second husband, the late Metropolitan Opera baritone, Louis Quilico. Among the Canadian composers who have written piano concerti and solo works for Petrowska Quilico are Violet Archer, Glenn Buhr, Omar Daniel, Christos Hatzis, Larysa Kuzmenko, Gary Kulesha, Alexina Louie, Heather Schmidt and John Weinzweig. Currently, Petrowska Quilico makes her home in Toronto, where she is Professor of Piano and Musicology at York University.

Juhan Puhm

Juhan Puhm was born in 1964 in Toronto to Estonian parents. He began his professional career as a composer in 1991 when Pierre Boulez conducted his orchestral work Mosaic Op. 1. Since then, slowly and with focus,

he has added to his body of work. Performances and premieres of works have taken place with John Hess and Dairine Ni Mheadhra of Queen of Puddings Music Theatre, Robert Aitken of New Music Concerts, Autumn Leaf Performance and Continuum. He has also worked with sopranos Stacie Robinson and Jane Archibald. Works of an operatic nature and traditional musics seem to be of concern for the future.

Northern Songs Op. 6 (2001)

programme note by Juhan Puhm

Northern Songs Op. 6 was composed in 2001. It is scored for an original ensemble of 9 instruments. The songs of Northern Songs are birdsongs, all of which have accompanied me over many years of hiking and trudging. In nature it may be realized that there is also music in this world that is not of our doing, the sounds of birds, other creatures and even the inanimate world. Myths of the past recall those who could understand this language. Our own music conveys our emotions and ideas, and so has greater meaning than just sounds. The question is, do natural songs and sounds as well communicate a sense more than just sound, a sense that is beyond our perception?

Free from our burdens and yet singing “songs”, some fifteen different birds (along with fireflies!, crickets and spring peepers) join this composition. Birds sing free of any musical temperament. Over the centuries, all of our western instruments have unfortunately evolved to be tempered. Birds also with their complicated rhythms know nothing of written duration. While I compose my musical structures, oppositely in nature there are beautiful and free coincidences of sounds, direction and distance. Regardless, every bird singing here holds for me a remembrance of a place or a story. This work is dedicated to Jane, Isaac and Tim.

33rd season | 277th event

Sunday May 16, 2004 · 8:00 pm

Co-presented with Two New Hours on CBC Radio Two

Echo (Ecco (Eco))

Canadian Music for large ensembles

Roger Admiral, piano

Trevor Brandenburg, percussion

Robert Aitken, flute & conductor

NMC Ensemble

Howard Bashaw (1957)

minimalisms (2003) §

concerto for piano and percussion

Brian Current (1972)

Concertino (2004) §

for solo flute and strings

Ronald Bruce Smith (1961)

Echo (Ecco (Eco)) (1995)

Jim O'Leary (1971)

Untitled Work (2003) §

§ World Premiere

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Howard Bashaw

Originally from White Rock, British Columbia, Howard Bashaw is a graduate of the University of British Columbia (DMA, 1989). He is currently Associate Professor of Music at the University of Alberta where he teaches composition, orchestration, and theory and analysis. He has also taught at the University of British Columbia and at the Université Canadienne en France. Bashaw's repertoire ranges from solo piano to full orchestra. He has received commissions through the Canada Council for the Arts, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, and the CBC Radio Music Department.

Recent works for ensemble include New Music Concerts, the Vancouver New Music Society, the Société musique de contemporaine du Québec, the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra with the Hammerhead Consort, the Continuum Ensemble (London, UK), the EastWest Quartet, the Now Age Orchestra, Duo Majoya (organ and piano) and Duo Kovalis (percussion and piano). His works for solo piano were premiered by Marc Couroux

(Form Archimage), Corey Hamm (Preludes Book 1), Haley Simons (Preludes, Book 2) and Barbara Pritchard (Hosu). Recordings include the BASHAW double CD (2000, various artists, Arktos recordings, SRI Canada); Eolian Braid on the the Hammerhead Consort's Traffic CD (1999, Arktos Recordings, SRI Canada); and Horos on the Electric Counterpoint CD (1994, Niek de Groot, double bass and Tatjana Kukoc, guitar, Artelier Music, Cologne). Bashaw is currently working on new works for the Vancouver-based Standing Wave ensemble and Hard Rubber Orchestra. A new CD containing four recent works will be released in 2004.

Minimalisms(2003)

Minimalisms is a double chamber concerto featuring piano and mallet percussion. Its four movements generate non-programmatic narratives based on self-defining contexts of expectation, direction, arrival and resolution, and are therefore similar in these regards to goal-oriented processes exhibited by the vast majority of 'tonal' musics. Without claiming originality in doing so, Minimalisms thus belongs more to a post-minimalist aesthetic than it does to mainstream minimalism (accepting the existence of the latter). The plurality underscoring the title Minimalisms recognizes both the possibility for generalized, inclusive diversification within the genre, and, more specifically, that each of the work's four movements is characterized by a different, stylistically derived compositional technique or approach.

I Less is More

The piano is used in a somewhat atypical manner here with its continuum of rapido single-note attacks being deliberately associated with the mallet percussion idiom. Locked daringly in precise rhythmic unison at presto molto throughout, the piano and marimba simultaneously unfold independent, yet coordinated streams of cell expansion or diminution. The resulting texture is a complex of pattern-based transformations wherein the superimposition of different-sized groupings of cells creates not only an evolving counterpoint of shifting alignments and harmonies, but also the illusion of incrementally changing tempi.

II More or Less

Brash, eccentric and rhythmically complex, the second movement is based on multiple layers and dialogues of collage-like expanding ostinati, whose rates of development are independent within each of the instruments or instrument groupings. Whereas cell permutation and shifting alignments found in the first movement occurred within clearly defined sections of the overall form, similar processes found in this second movement (now occurring on a much larger, compounded scale) actually manifest as the form itself.

III Less

Minimal.

IV More

The strict rhythmic unison found between soloists in the first movement returns, but now with an added voice-layer in the piano. In addition to processes of repetition, expansion and shifting alignments, 'minimalism' in this final movement is (contrary to the impression of its own title) bluntly exposed as a principle of strict limitation; not counting rests, only sixteenth-notes are used for the entire ensemble throughout the entire movement. Of note is the accompanying pointillistic texture found in the woodwinds and brass, one that evolves through a strategic process of addition within the extended opening section.

Minimalisms was commissioned through The Canada Council for the Arts by New Music Concerts, Toronto.

- Howard Bashaw

Brian Current

Brian Current's music has been widely performed both at home and abroad by outstanding ensembles. His pieces have received awards in Paris, New York, Adelaide and Vancouver and have been broadcast in over 35 countries.

Among recent honours is the 2003 Barlow Prize, where after reviewing 427 composer applications from 32 countries, the judging panel awarded Brian Current a US\$17,000 commission for the Indianapolis Symphony and the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. Other international prizes include the Selected Work (under 30) at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris 2001, a nomination for the American Academy's Prix de Rome 2003, the 1st prize in the 1998 Polish International Musik y Zabawa competition and the Jury Prize at the NEM's International Forum for Young Composers, held at the 2000 Adelaide festival, Australia. At home, in addition to three first prizes from the SOCAN, he has also received awards from ASCAP, the CBC and the Canada Council for the Arts, including the Robert Flemming Prize for most outstanding young composer. In March of 2001, he was awarded the Grand Prize in the CBC National Competition for Young Composers, the country's highest distinction for composers under 30 years.

Concertino(2004)

Concertino (2004) is adapted from a 2002 Canada Council commission for recorder player Mathew Jones. Shapes in the piece are created in part through dramatic change in speed: tempos accelerate then immediately slow down in a series of irregular waves. As a concerto, the music relies heavily on the back-and-forth between soloist and ensemble. I thought it might be interesting if this were compressed down to the eighth-note level (call-response-call-response) and made to move forward as a single mechanism. I also imagined blanketing the hall with the sound of flutes positioned at the back of the room. At times they act as distant relatives to the solo line but more often they fill out the sound with tumbling gestures their own. String players change one at a time from arco to pizz and back, creating a gradual change in the texture overall.

- Brian Current

Jim O'Leary

A native of Windsor, Newfoundland, Canada, Jim started playing drums at the age of 15, and studied percussion at the University of Prince Edward Island, receiving his Bachelor of Music Degree in 1994. In June 2000, he completed his Masters in Composition under the direction of composer Jan Sandström at the School of Music in Pitee, Sweden. Jim's music has been played by, among others: the Umee Symphony Orchestra, Arraymusic, the Motion ensemble, and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

In 2001, he placed second in the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's composer competition, and received Stockhom county's Culture Prize 2002. Jim currently resides in Stockholm, Sweden, where he divides his time between working as a music teacher, playing drums in a band, and composing.

His latest orchestral work, a CBC commission, will be premiered by the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra on May 1st, 2004.

Untitled Piece(2003)

My Untitled piece for Chamber Ensemble dates back to my student days at the School of Music in Pitee,

Sweden. We in the composition class, along with other willing students, formed an ensemble to perform our compositional experiments. We tortured the musicians with our bad writing and endless questions but, as was the point, we learned a lot and I remember fondly the fun time we had creating our little “masterpieces”!

I had always liked the ending of this piece and welcomed the opportunity to rescore/revise this composition for New Music Concerts. The original scoring calls for: alto flute, clarinet/bass clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, alto trombone, tuba, piano, and 2 percussionists. The revised version is scored for: 2 flutes (one doubling alto flute); clarinet; bass clarinet; trumpet; alto trombone; harp; piano; 2 percussion; violin; viola; cello.

- Jim O’Leary

Ronald Bruce Smith

Ronald Bruce Smith studied composition at the University of Toronto, McGill University and the University of California at Berkeley from which he received the Ph.D. in music. He has also studied at the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau and at IRCAM in Paris, France, and has held residencies at the Banff Centre for the Arts. His principal composition teachers include Tristan Murail, Bruce Mather, Richard Felciano and Talivaldis Kenins. He has also studied computer music and synthesis with David Wessel. In 1996-97 he was a visiting composer at Stanford University’s Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA) and since 1998 he has been a composer-in-residence at the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT) at the University of California at Berkeley. Smith has taught at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, the University of California at Berkeley and at Stanford University.

The musicologist Beth Levy wrote, “Many of Smith’s works share a contemplative character, a preoccupation with enhancing the resonance of a given ensemble, and an openness to new sound sources (including non-Western ones). For example, his Kyrie Eleison combines a soprano soloist, orchestra and live electronics in a ‘quiet plea for mercy as well as a static prayer for spiritual reflection’; intended as a memorial for the fourteen students murdered at the University of Montreal in December 1989. In Meditations, based on research begun at IRCAM and realized at Berkeley’s Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT), Smith manipulates materials drawn from Pakistani vocal music and the Indonesian gamelan (percussion orchestra). His interest in timbral nuance has taken many and diverse forms. In works like Remembrances of a Garden for chamber ensemble, timbral variety comes from dramatic articulations and subtle performance techniques. In his chamber work Flux, he relies on the mathematical exploration of tone color based on the imaginative manipulation of harmonic spectra from the overtone series.”

Smith has received many awards and commissions for his work including commissions funded by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, and Gibson Guitars. Recent performers of his works include the Aitken/Tureski Duo, the Arraymusic Ensemble, California E.A.R. Unit, Cikada, Continuum Ensemble, Del Sol String Quartet, Earplay, Pierrot Ensemble, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Speculum Musicae, Vancouver New Music Ensemble, the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and at festivals in Europe, the Americas and Australia. His music has been recorded to CD by Continuum, Arraymusic, the Del Sol String Quartet and the Evergreen Club Gamelan.

Echo (Ecco (Eco)) (1995)

Premiered by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
Bramwell Tovey, conductor

The title of the work Echo (Ecco (Eco)) reflects certain characteristics of the music heard in the work. The title is made of three words; the English word echo; the Italian word ecco and the last name of the famous Italian author and semiotician Umberto Eco. The three words of the title when spoken correctly one after the other go through subtle changes in the sounds of their vowels. That is, there is a timbral (sound colour) change between the words. This is reflected in the music in that a line or chord may go through several colour changes, via its orchestration, while being sustained. The word echo is also reflected in the music in that melodic figures are often closely echoed in other instruments to create a large and complex reverberation effect.

- Ronald Bruce Smith