45th season | 370th event  
Saturday October 17, 2015  
Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts presents

TURNING POINT ENSEMBLE

Brenda Fedoruk flute David Owen oboe Erin Fung, Michelle Anderson clarinets
Ingrid Chang bassoon Tom Shorthouse trumpet Steve Denroche horn Jeremy Berkman trombone
Jonathan Bernard percussion Mary Sokol-Brown, Domagoj Ivanovic violins Marcus Takizawa viola
Ariel Barnes cello David Brown bass Janelle Nadeau harp Jane Hayes piano Owen Underhill conductor

Programme:

Ana Sokolović (Serbia/Canada 1968)  
…and I need a room to receive 5000 people… or what a glorious day,  
the birds are singing “hallelujah” (2014)

Jocelyn Morlock (Canada 1969)  
Luft Suite (2011/2015)

Linda Catlin Smith (USA/Canada 1957)  
Gold Leaf (2010/2015)  
— Intermission —

Dorothy Chang (USA/Canada 1970)  
Three Windows (2010-2011)
I. Streams and Strata  II. Soft and silent, encircling high  III. Metal on Wood

Alexina Louie (Canada 1949)  
A Curious Passerby At Fu’s Funeral (2015)
I. A Curious Passerby at Fu’s Funeral  II. An Incident in the Night  III. Staring Down the Demon  
World Premiere, commissioned by Turning Point Ensemble with the assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts

CONCERT NOTES

Serbian-born, Montreal-based composer Ana Sokolović studied composition at university under Dusan Radić in Novi Sad and Zoran Erri in Belgrade, then completed a master’s degree under the supervision of José Evangelista at the Université de Montréal in the mid-1990s. Her work is suffused with her fascination for different forms of artistic expression. Both rich and playful, her compositions draw the listener into a vividly imagined world, often inspired by Balkan folk music and its asymmetrical festive rhythms. Over the years, Ana Sokolović has earned a steady stream of commissions and awards. Today, her repertoire includes orchestral, vocal, chamber, operatic and theatrical pieces. In 2009, she won the prestigious National Arts Centre Award, which included commissions, residencies and teaching positions over a five-year period. Ana Sokolović just received a prestigious commission from the Canadian Opera Company for a main-stage opera that will be premiered during the 2019/20 season. The libretto La Reine-Garçon, originally written as a theatre play by one of the most important and talented Quebec play writers Michel Marc Bouchard, will be adapted by the author. Ana Sokolović teaches composition at the Université de Montréal.
Ana Sokolović: ...and I need a room to receive 5000 people... or what a glorious day, the birds are singing “halleluia” (2014)

This piece is inspired by the musical elements of two songs from the Serbian rock band EKV / Ekatarina Velika. It is comprised of 3 movements: fast-slow-fast. This piece is dedicated to the Belgrade urban generation of the 80s and to Owen Underhill and his fantastic Turning Point Ensemble. — Ana Sokolović

Juno-nominated composer Jocelyn Morlock is one of Canada’s most distinctive voices. She is currently the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra’s Composer in Residence and recently completed a term as inaugural Composer in Residence for Vancouver’s innovative concert series, Music on Main. Morlock’s music has received numerous accolades, including: Top 10 at the 2002 International Rostrum of Composers; Winner of the 2003 CMC Prairie Region Emerging Composers competition; winner of the Mayor’s Arts Awards in Vancouver (2008); two nominations for Best Classical Composition at the Western Canadian Music Awards (2006, 2010) and a Juno Nomination for Classical Composition of the Year (2011, Exaudi.) Her first full-length CD release, Cobalt, was nominated for two Western Canadian Music Awards, for Classical Composition (Oiseaux bleus et sauvages) and Classical Recording of the Year.

Jocelyn Morlock completed a Bachelor of Music in piano performance at Brandon University, studying with pianist Robert Richardson. She received both a Master’s degree and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of British Columbia. Among her teachers were Gerhard Ginader, Pat Carrabrè, Stephen Chatman, Keith Hamel, and the late Russian-Canadian composer Nikolai Korndorf.


The music for Luft was originally written as a 35-minute ballet, choreographed by Simone Orlando and danced by Josh Beamish and his MOVE: The Company. Luft was inspired by the enduring theme of quest within Firebird folklore. This short suite from Luft adapts music from three of the original six sections. The music of the prologue starts with a gently surreal, delicate ticking like a tripwired music-box waiting, perhaps, to explode. In the second section dizzy chromatic motion evokes energy, flight, and attempts at escape which ultimately end in failure. The final section builds from nervousness into a panicked, wild battle...at its conclusion, the music becomes more relaxed and buoyant.

— Jocelyn Morlock

“We must let go of the life we have planned, so as to accept the one that is waiting for us.” - Joseph Campbell, quoted by choreographer Simone Orlando as the note for Luft’s premiere.

Linda Catlin Smith grew up in New York and lives in Toronto. She studied music in NY, and at the University of Victoria (Canada). Her music has been performed and/or recorded by: Tafelmusik, Other Minds Festival, California Ear Unit, Kitchener-Waterloo, Victoria and Vancouver Symphonies, Arraymusic, Tapestry New Opera, Gryphon Trio, Via Salzburg, Evergreen Club Gamelan, Turning Point Ensemble, Vancouver New Music, and the Del Sol, Penderecki, and Bozzini quartets, among many others. Her work Ballad (for Eve Egoyan, piano and Andrew Smith, cello) was released as a solo CD on the World Editions label. She has been supported in her work by the Canada Council, Ontario Arts Council, Chalmers Foundation, K.M. Hunter Award, Banff Centre, SOCAN Foundation and Toronto Arts Council; in 2005 her work Garland (for Tafelmusik) was awarded Canada’s prestigious Jules Léger Prize. In addition to her work as an independent composer, she was Artistic Director of the Toronto ensemble Arraymusic from 1988 to 1993, and she was a member of the ground-breaking multidisciplinary performance collective URGE from 1992-2006. Linda teaches composition privately and at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Canada. A new CD of her piano music, performed by Eve Egoyan, has just been released.

Linda Catlin Smith: Gold Leaf (2010/2015)

In this work, I was exploring a variety of sound colours one can find in the rich combination of instruments of the chamber orchestra. The work seemed to me like a painting, where some parts of it are thickly layered with colour, other parts are thin and almost transparent. The percussion adds a shimmer here and there, like applying a bit of gold leaf to the surface. I was also thinking of this as a metaphor for harmonic colour – adding in pitches to harmonies and changing the lightness or darkness of the harmonic palette. I finished the work at the end of August, when the first leaves started to turn gold. The piece was commissioned by the Glenn Gould School’s New Music Ensemble, directed by Brian Current, through the generosity of the Ontario Arts Council. My thanks go to Owen Underhill and the Turning Point Ensemble for this performance. — L.C. Smith

The music of composer Dorothy Chang has been described as “evocative and kaleidoscopic” (Seattle Times) and praised for its colourful scoring and range of dramatic expression. Her music is rooted in the Western art music tradition but often reflects the eclectic mix of musical influences from her youth, ranging from popular and Western folk music to elements of traditional Chinese music.

Chang’s catalog includes over sixty works for solo, chamber and large ensembles as well as collaborations involving theatre, dance and video. She has several works written for Chinese and Western instruments in combination, reflecting a recent and developing interest in her music. Projects from the past year include Invisible Distance, a cello concerto premiered by
cellist Ariel Barnes and the Vancouver Island Symphony Orchestra, *Of Fragments and Dreams* for string orchestra premiered by the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, a collaborative adaptation of Gertrude Stein’s play *White Wines* for four vocalists and percussion, and a new chamber work for the Nu:BC Collective to be premiered in 2016. Chang joined the music faculty at the University of British Columbia in 2003 where she currently serves as a Professor of Music.

**Dorothy Chang: Three Windows (2010-2011)**

I. Streams and Strata II. Soft and silent, encircling high III. Metal on Wood

*Three Windows* (2010-11) is one of several of my works inspired by geography, place and time. This particular work takes its inspiration from the furthest western point of the coast of Vancouver, British Columbia, where my home has been since 2003. Here, an open stretch of sky meets the vast ocean waters, and the coastline is defined by groups of towering pines and firs that are steadily giving way to massive highrise construction. Looking out toward the Pacific, one’s eye might catch in a single glance the striking juxtaposition of nature, man and machine. Each of this work’s three movements isolates a specific element of this multi-dimensional panorama.

The opening movement “Streams and Strata” is a musical exploration of the constantly shifting layers and patterns of clouds, light, sky and water stretched in parallel streams across the expansive horizon. The middle movement “Soft and silent, encircling high” is inspired by the slow, unhurried and wide spiraling patterns of an eagle in solitary flight, as often observed over this coastal area. Similarly, the music features a series of repetitive patterns that first survey then gradually move from one musical terrain to the next. The final movement, “Metal on Wood” is a twisted scherzo of sorts. Brief, energetic and at times explosive, the movement combines the driving rhythms of urban life with dark, unsettled undertones. Simple musical motives are introduced, then quickly distorted, layered and stacked into excessively dense masses of sound. *Three Windows* was commissioned by the Turning Point Ensemble with assistance from the Arts Partners in Creative Development. — Dorothy Chang

**Alexina Louie** is one of Canada’s most highly regarded and most often performed composers. Her desire for self-expression, her recognizable sound world, as well as her explorations of Asian music, art, and philosophy have contributed to the development of her unique musical voice. Louie’s work is communicative and highly dramatic, and it pushes the boundaries of convention and tradition. Her orchestral works have been performed by such esteemed conductors as Sir Andrew Davis, Leonard Slatkin, Kent Nagano and Charles Dutoit.

Louie has been commissioned to compose for all musical genres including solo, chamber, orchestra, ballet, and opera. Her music has been performed in many important international centres including Beijing, Tokyo, Vienna, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Sydney and New York. Her major theatrical works include *The Scarlet Princess*, a full-length opera with libretto by Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang (*M. Butterfly*) commissioned by the Canadian Opera Company and works for The National Ballet of Canada. In 2006, her filmed comedic opera *Burnt Toast* (librettist Dan Redican, director Larry Weinstein) was awarded the prestigious International Golden Prague Grand Prix (147 films from 28 countries). The team’s ground-breaking six minute opera film *Toothpaste* has been twice shown in the Louvre.

An Officer of the Order of Canada, a recipient of the Order of Ontario, and Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Medal, Louie received an honorary doctorate from the University of Calgary in 2002. She has twice won the JUNO Award in the category of Best Classical Composition. Louie is also an award-winning composer for film and television.

**Alexina Louie: A Curious Passerby At Fu’s Funeral (2015)**

I. A Curious Passerby at Fu’s Funeral II. An Incident in The Night III. Staring Down The Demon

This multi-movement work for large ensemble is a dramatic composition that inhabits a highly charged emotional landscape. Commissioned by Owen Underhill and The Turning Point Ensemble, it explores extreme ranges of heightened activity. The first movement surges forward with virtuosic exchanges between the piano and the percussion. This eventually develops into sections characterized by relentless repeated chords and gestures (“cortège” and “dirge”).

The second movement begins with solo utterances in the oboe which serve as the introduction to a series of haunting shô-like chord clusters. I have been inspired by this beautiful multi-reed Japanese mouth organ’s unusual manner of sound production, where the performer inhales and exhales through the instrument, resulting in a cloud of sound. The unusual technique required for playing the shô, as well as its colourful array of pitches, have served as a key element in several of my compositions. In the second movement, the calmness of the shô-like section is interrupted by a forceful musical ‘incident.’ The movement ends with a peaceful musical moment that suggests a night sky filled with stars.

The final movement brings *A Curious Passerby at Fu’s Funeral* to a propulsive conclusion with its inspiration taken from Asian drumming. This piece is inspired by my own imagined scenario that traverses the path between mysterious and explosive elements. *A Curious Passerby At Fu’s Funeral* was commissioned through the assistance of The Canada Council. — Alexina Louie
Turning Point Ensemble

The Vancouver-based Turning Point Ensemble, founded by its musician members in 2002, is dedicated to the performance of extraordinary music for large chamber ensemble from the early twentieth century through to the present day. Programming directions include music of time and place (composers banned by the Third Reich), rediscovery of forgotten repertoire (first professional production of Barbara Pentland’s 1952 opera *The Lake*), masterworks of the early twentieth century including original arrangements (*Stravinsky Firebird Suite*, *Debussy Jeux*), genre experimentation crossing jazz and new music, cross-cultural collaboration (*Westbank and Kwakwaka’wakw First Nations*), and links of music across centuries. As part of a yearly subscription season, the ensemble has regularly initiated and participated in innovative cross-disciplinary collaborations, including dance, film, theatre, and the visual arts. Such productions have included a rare remount of Erik Satie’s last experimental work *Relâche*, complete with newly created dance, and live synchronization to René Clair’s surrealist film *Entr’acte*; and in 2015, an international production *air india [redacted]* by Irish composer Jürgen Simpson based on poetry by Renée Sarojini Saklikar.

The Turning Point Ensemble commissions leading Canadian and international composers including Dorothy Chang, Dave Douglas, Anthony Genge, Farangis Nurulla-Khoja, Rudolf Komorous, Alexina Louie, Michael Oesterle, John Oliver, Linda C. Smith, Rodney Sharman, Ana Sokolović and Owen Underhill. The ensemble’s discography includes discs featuring the music of Barbara Pentland and Rudolf Komorous, a recording featuring clarinetist François Houle as soloist, and a new release with musica intima of music by Ana Sokolović and Julia Wolfe. The ensemble is the winner of the prestigious 2011 Rio Tinto Alcan Performing Arts Award in Music, and has been named one of Vancouver’s best classical musical ensembles.

Owen Underhill, Artistic Director and Conductor

Composer and conductor Owen Underhill has been a leading figure in development of new music on the west coast. His two decades with Vancouver New Music, including serving as Artistic Director from 1987 – 2000, were a period of growth and diverse programming. He is one of the co-founders of the Turning Point Ensemble, and has enjoyed the opportunity to be part of such a distinctive and innovative ensemble. Underhill has premiered more than 250 works as a conductor, and has worked directly with leading international composers including Louis Andriessen, Gavin Bryars, Sofia Gubaidulina, Giya Kancheli, James MacMillan, Toru Takemitsu, and Judith Weir.

As a composer, Underhill writes for diverse combinations including chamber music, orchestra, voice, and music for dance. He has composed recent commissions for percussionist Daniel Tones, the Novo Ensemble, Vancouver New Music, and the clarinet and piano duo Sea and Sky comprised of Jane Hayes and François Houle. He is currently at work on a cello concerto for Ari Barnes and TPE, and a piece for solo sheng and the Vancouver Intercultural Orchestra.
Celebrating Schafer

A fundraiser in support of the reissue of Loving (Toi)
Featuring fine food and drink generously provided by the New Music Concerts board of directors,
door prizes, raffles & live performances of music by iconic Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer

Programme:

La Testa d’Adriana from The Greatest Show (1977)
Brooke Dufton soprano Joseph Macerollo accordion

Nocturne from And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon (1996)
Max Christie clarinet

Suite for clarinet, cello and piano (1954)
Max Christie clarinet David Hetherington cello Gregory Oh piano

Flew Toots for Two Flutes (2004)
Robert and Dianne Aitken flutes

Departure Music for solo trumpet and echoing instruments
from And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon (1996)
Stuart Laughton trumpet (and the ensemble)

Special Thanks to Edward Epstein and Gallery 345

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R. Murray Schafer (born Sarnia, Ontario, 1933) has won national and international acclaim not only for his achievement as a composer, but also as an educator, environmentalist, literary scholar, journalist, visual artist, and provocateur. He has written more than 70 compositions, ranging from orchestral and vocal pieces to musical theatre and multimedia rituals. In his music and in his writings he repeatedly challenges and transcends orthodox approaches to the relationships among music, performer, audience and setting. He has expanded the potential and appreciation of music and its place in the arts and culture of our time. Among his myriad honours are two prizes from the Fromm Foundation, the Canadian Music Council Medal, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the William Harold Moon Award, Composer of the Year Award from the Canadian Music Council, the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music, the Prix Honegger, the first Glenn Gould Prize for Music and Its Communication, the Molson Prize from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Louis Applebaum Composer’s Award, the Walter Carsen Prize for Excellence in the Performing Arts, the Governor General’s Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement and the title of Companion of the Order of Canada.

Loving (Toi) is an opera with music and text by R. Murray Schafer scored for small ensemble (including six percussion players) and lasting about 70 minutes. It was completed in 1965. One of its four major arias (Geography of Eros), however, was completed in 1963 and premiered in Toronto by Mary Morrison. The work was commissioned by Radio Canada and performed first (in part) as Toi on the TV series L’Heure du concert in February 1966, produced by Pierre Mercure with music direction by Serge Garant. It was rebroadcast on the CBC English network as Loving later the same year 1966. Loving received semi-staged performances of the
complete score in 1978 in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax by a cast that included Mary Lou Fallis, Jean McPhail, Susan Gudgeon and Kathy Terrell and a chamber orchestra conducted by Robert Aitken. It was recorded that year by the same performers and released by Melbourne Records.

In Schafer’s words Loving is a “synaesthetic work” in which “several arts are employed in extremely close, frequently interpenetrating relationships.” There is no plot in the sense of unfolding action; rather there is a series of comments on and suggestions about love between man and woman. The female psyche is portrayed by the four singers — Modesty (soprano), Ishtar, Vanity, and Eros (all mezzos) — and by an actress, Elle. The male psyche is represented by an actor, Lui, and a voice on tape, Le Poète. Dancers and other extras are optional. The libretto employs both English and French, the French portions of the score being translated by Gabriel Charpentier from Schafer’s English text. The work was published by Berandol in 1979 under the single title Loving.
45th season | 373rd event
Sunday December 6, 2015
Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts presents: A Portrait of

PHILIPPE LEROUX

New Music Concerts Ensemble
Robert Aitken direction

Programme:

**Elliott Carter** (USA 1908-2012)  
Canon for Three Equal Instruments (1971)  
Robert Aitken, Dianne Aitken, Les Altt flutes

**Philippe Leroux** (France 1959)  
AAA (1996)  
Dianne Aitken flute Max Christie clarinet Rick Sacks percussion Gregory Oh piano  
Lynn Kuo violin Carolyn Blackwell viola David Hetherington cello Robert Aitken direction

**Scott Rubin** (USA 1989)  
less than equals three (2015) (World Premiere)  
Dianne Aitken flute Wallace Halladay saxophone Ian Cowie trombone Erica Goodman harp Gregory Oh piano  
Corey Gemmell violin Carolyn Blackwell viola David Hetherington cello Robert Aitken direction

— Intermission —

**Gérard Grisey** (France 1946-1998)  
Talea (1986)  
Dianne Aitken flute Max Christie clarinet Gregory Oh piano Lynn Kuo violin David Hetherington cello

**Philippe Leroux**  
...Ami ... Chemin ... Oser ... Vie... (2010-2011)  
Dianne Aitken flute Graham Mackenzie oboe Max Christie clarinet Michele Verheul bass clarinet  
Jerry Robinson contrabassoon Christopher Gongos horn Robert Venables trumpet Ian Cowie trombone  
Rick Sacks percussion Gregory Oh piano Lynn Kuo, Corey Gemmell violins Carolyn Blackwell viola  
David Hetherington cello Adam Scime contrabass Robert Aitken direction

Philippe Leroux was born in Boulogne Billancourt (France) on September 24th, 1959. In 1978 he entered the Paris Conservatory (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique), studied with Ivo Malec, Claude Ballif, Pierre Schaeffer and Guy Reibel and obtained three first prizes. Meanwhile, he followed classes with Olivier Messiaen, Franco Donatoni, Betsy Jolas, Jean-Claude Eloy and Iannis Xénakis. In 1993 he was selected to enter the Villa Medici in Rome for two years, where he remained until 1995. His compositional output (about seventy works to date) includes symphonic, vocal, electronic, acoustic and chamber music. His works are the result of various commissioners, with among them the French Ministry of Culture, Radio-France Philharmonic Orchestra, Südwestfunk Baden Baden, IRCAM, Percussions de Strasbourg, Ensemble InterContemporain, Ensemble Court-Circuit, the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne de Montreal, Avanta Ensemble, Ensemble 2e2m, Ensemble Sillages, Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain, INA-GRM, Sixtrum, Ensemble Ictus, Festival Musica, Ensemble BIT 20, Koussevitsky Foundation, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Ensemble Athelas, Orchestre National de Lorraine, Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice, CIRM, INTEGRA, and several other institutions of international reknown.

His music is widely performed in various European festivals and International orchestras such as Donaueschingen, Radio-France Présences (Paris), Agora (Paris), Venice Biennale, Bath Festival, Festival Musica (Strasbourg), Stockholm ISCM, Barcelona Festival, Musiques en Scènes (Lyon), Festival Manca (Nice), Bergen Festival, Ultima (Oslo) Festival, Tage für Neue Musik (Zürich), BBC Symphony Orchestra (London), Tonhalle Orchester Zürich, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (Glasgow), Philharmonia Orchestra (London), Czech Philharmonic etc. He has received many prizes and awards: Prix Hervé Dugardin, SACEM Prize, André Caplet and Nadia and Lili Boulanger Prizes from the Academy of Fine Arts (Institut de France), Salabert Prize and
Arthur Honegger Prize (Fondation de France). In addition, Philippe Leroux writes articles on contemporary music, gives lectures and teaches composition at Berkeley University (California), Harvard, Grieg Academy (Bergen), Columbia University (New York), Royal Conservatory of Copenhagen, University of Toronto, Fondation Royaumont, IRCAM, American Conservatoire at Fontainebleau, Paris and Lyon Conservatoires Nationaux Supérieurs, Domaine Forget (Quebec), Georgia Institute of Technology at Atlanta and the Tchaikovsky Conservatory at Moscow among others.

From 2001 to 2006 he was a teacher in composition at the IRCAM “Cursus d’Informatique Musicale.” In 2005 and 2006 he was professor at McGill University (Fondation Langlois programme). From 2007 to 2009 he was composer-in-residence at Metz Arsenal and at Orchestre National de Lorraine, then from 2009 to 2011, invited professor at Université de Montréal (UdeM). Since September 2011 he is Associate Professor in composition at the Schulich School of Music, McGill University. He is currently composer-in-residence of Ensemble MEITAR in Tel-Aviv.

— lerouxcomposition.com

**Philippe Leroux** (France 1959) – *AAA* (1996)

Written in 1996 for flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, piano and percussion, this piece is originally an instrumentation of *Image à Rameau*, composed for four wind MIDI controllers (electronic instruments). The idea is to transpose musical behaviours from the world of electronic sounds to the instrumental field while strictly respecting the initial partition. But, as in any project of this kind, there is obviously overflowing in a way that the piece acquires a new autonomy. Indeed, the instrumental techniques induce musicality that is not contained in the electronic model. I wanted, among other things, to find some familiar sounds from my teenage years when I was playing jazz. If the shape and overall structure of the piece remain the same, it is not the same musical language. In one case, the ear focuses on timbres, on the dynamic morphology and on the harmonic colors. In another case, the traditional sounds of the flute, the clarinet, the violin… and the predominance of pitches emphasize the syntactic aspect. In both pieces, it is indeed the same music, but does not express the same thing. The initial pattern, developed throughout the work, is extracted from the harpsichord piece *La Poule* by Jean-Philippe Rameau. AAA was commissioned by Ars Mobilis and premiered by l’Ensemble Ictus, conducted by Georges-Elie Octors, on January 16, 1998 at the Hippodrome in Douai, France.

— Philippe Leroux

**Philippe Leroux** — *...Ami ... Chemin ... Oser ... Vie...* (2010-2011)

Composed from September 2010 to August 2011, this work was commissioned by the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne of Montréal. It was premiered by the ensemble under the direction of Lorraine Vaillancourt on October 12, 2011.

When I started working on this piece, I intended to explore the concept of musical elasticity. It then happened that my brother died in September 2011 and I found it impossible to compose music that can speak of anything other than life and death.

This work evokes, with its slow and repetitive tread, a march. This marching, this sometimes indecisive roaming, is the path we all must follow; for some, this journey is like that of convicts or gladiators, those who know they will die — *Morituri te salutant*. It is also like breathing, which accompanies us every day of our lives and then switches off one day in a desperate entropy, but also leads us towards an eternity without limits or end.

The harmony in this work comes from two sources. The first is that of a spectral analysis of a type of bell very common in Quebec, especially in Trois-Rivières, Rimouski and Quebec: the Mears bell. The second is derived from an analysis, this time from a frequency modulation by sound synthesis. The idea is not to generate frequency modulation arrangements, but to analyze complex sounds obtained by the same method. The difference may seem subtle, but it is noticeable. It’s the same as I have utilised in my other works: the difference between the four pitches of a formation of four sounds and the formation derived from the results of the analysis of the resulting harmony sung by four voices in a particular acoustic. In the latter case, the harmonics generated by the voice interfere so as to create a more complex and living sound. A harmonic dialectic is formed throughout the work between the
natural harmony of the bell and the more sophisticated sound of the frequency modulation. Towards the end, the bell itself is modulated, thereby establishing a possible continuity between the two harmonic universes.

The work traverses through often aborted solos which speak of the impossibility of passing through the portal of death victoriously. These solos lead to saturated harmonic timbres that express the anger and violence of the rebellion before death, that of others but also our own. These moments of great density and excessive, extreme frequencies mark, in the multiplicity of solos, a vision of death shattering all limits, but also the equally disturbing aspects of life, its violence and its hardness.

The form of the work is a braid with two strands: one a rather monophonic type and the other more polyphonic, which intertwine and are traversed by the aforementioned pulsed walking in a kind of “skewered” format. If the monophonic strand dominates early in the work it is polyphony which gradually takes the upper hand to suggest the density and vital saturation that infuses the being who does not wish to die.

In addition to my brother Jean-Claude, this work is dedicated to Lorraine Vaillancourt and the musicians of the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne of Montréal.  

— Philippe Leroux (Translation: Daniel Foley)

Gérard Grisey was born in Belfort on June 17th, 1946. He studied at the Trossingen Conservatory in Germany from 1963 to 1965 before entering the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris. Here he won prizes for piano accompaniment, harmony, counterpoint, fugue and composition (Olivier Messiaen’s class from 1968 to 1972). During this period, he also attended Henri Dutilleux’s classes at the Ecole Normale de Musique (1968), as well as summer schools at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena (1969), and in Darmstadt with Ligeti, Stockhausen and Xenakis in 1972.

He was granted a scholarship by the Villa Medici in Rome from 1972 to 1974, and in 1973 founded a group called L’Itinéraire with Tristan Murail, Roger Tessier and Michael Levinas, later to be joined by Hugues Dufourt. Dérites, Périodes and Partiels were among the first pieces of spectral music. In 1974-75, he studied acoustics with Emile Leipp at the Paris VI University, and in 1980 became a trainee at IRCAM. In the same year he went to Berlin as a guest of the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst), and afterwards left for Berkeley, where he was appointed professor of theory and composition at the University of California (1982-1986). After returning to Europe, he taught composition at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris from 1987, and held numerous composition seminars in France (Centre Acanthes, Lyon, Paris) and abroad (Darmstadt, Freiburg, Milan, Reggio Emilia, Oslo, Helsinki, Malmö, Göteborg, Los Angeles, Stanford, London, Moscow, Madrid, etc.). Gérard Grisey died in Paris on 11 November 1998.

Grisey’s music is often considered to belong to the genre of spectral music, which he is credited with founding along with fellow composer Tristan Murail, although he later disowned the label in interviews and writings. Nonetheless, he spent much of his career exploring the spectrum of tone colour between harmonic overtones and noise. In addition, he was fascinated by musical processes which unfold slowly, and he made musical time a major element of many of his pieces. He expressed the opinion that: “We are musicians and our model is sound not literature, sound not mathematics, sound not theatre, visual arts, quantum physics, geology, astrology or acupuncture”.

Gérard Grisey (France 1946-1998) — Talea

TALEA or The machine and the rank weeds

“Talea,” in Latin, means cutting. In medieval music this term designates a reitered rhythmic pattern to which a configuration of pitches called “color”, likewise reiterated and coinciding or not with the first, is grafted. In the twentieth century we have rediscovered this dissociation between pitches and durations. The idea of a “cutting” of the initial idea, of putting the various rhythmic structures in phase and out of phase, as well of a structure in two parts in which the second could easily be termed “color”, have suggested the title of this quintet to me. In Talea I tackle two aspects of musical discourse from which my research on instrumental synthesis, on microphonics and on contiguous transformations had estranged me, that is, speed and contrast.
Talea consists of two parts linked together without interruption which express two aspects or, more precisely, two auditory angles of a single phenomenon. Thus this single gesture (fast, fortissimo, ascending — slow, pianissimo, descending) is presented in the first part by durations of medium length and gradually eroded to the point of leveling off the contrasts. In the second part, it expresses the overall form and the succession of sequences. It is polyphonic in the first part and homophonic in the second. From the perceptual point of view, the first part seems to me like an inexorable process, a veritable machine for forging the freedom which will emerge in the second part. The course of the latter is in fact pierced by more or less irrational emergences, kinds of recollections from the first part, which gradually assume the colour of the new context until they become unrecognizable. These wild flowers, these rank weeds pushing up in the interstices of the machine, grow in importance and then overflow until they give the sections into which they have wormed their way like parasites an entirely unexpected colouration. — Gérard Grisey

Elliott Carter (December 11, 1908 - November 5, 2012) is internationally recognized as one of the most influential American voices in classical music, and a leading figure of modernism in the 20th and 21st centuries. He was hailed as “America’s great musical poet” by Andrew Porter and noted as “one of America’s most distinguished creative artists in any field” by his friend Aaron Copland. Carter’s prolific career spanned over 75 years, with more than 150 pieces, ranging from chamber music to orchestral works to opera, often marked with a sense of wit and humour. He received numerous honours and accolades, including the Pulitzer Prize on two occasions: in 1960 for his String Quartet No. 2 and in 1973 for his String Quartet No. 3. Born in New York City, Elliott Carter was encouraged towards a career in classical music by his friend and mentor Charles Ives. He studied under composers Walter Piston and Gustav Holst while attending Harvard University, and later traveled to Paris, studying with Nadia Boulanger. Following his studies in France, he returned to New York and devoted his time to composing and teaching, holding posts over the years at St. John’s College, the Peabody Conservatory, Yale University, Cornell University, and The Juilliard School, among others.

Carter’s early works, such as his Symphony No. 1 (1942) and Holiday Overture (1944), are written in a neoclassical style — influenced by his contemporaries Copland, Hindemith, and Stravinsky. After the Second World War, in works such as his Cello Sonata (1948) and String Quartet No. 1 (1950-51) he began to develop a signature rhythmic and harmonic language, which he continued to refine to the very end of his life. Igor Stravinsky hailed his Double Concerto for harpsichord, piano, and two chamber orchestras (1961) and Piano Concerto (1967) as “masterpieces.” A creative burst of imagination began to earn in earliest during the 1980s with works such as Night Fantasies (1980), Triple Duo (1982-83), Pentadode (1985), and major orchestral essays such as his Oboe Concerto (1986–87), Three Occasions for Orchestra (1989), Violin Concerto (1990), and Symphonia: sum fluxae pretium sper (1993–96). Carter’s only opera, What Next? (1997–98), with a libretto by Paul Griffiths, was introduced by Daniel Barenboim, a champion of the composer’s music, in Berlin in 1999. Carter composed more than sixty works after the age of ninety including his Cello Concerto (2000), Of Rewaking (2002), Dialogues (2003), Three Illusions for Orchestra (2004), Mosaic (2004), and In the Distances of Sleep (2006). In his final years, Carter continued to complete works with astounding frequency, including interventions for piano and orchestra (2007), Flute Concerto (2008), What are Years (2009), Concertino for Bass Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra (2009) [first performed by New Music Concerts with clarinetist Virgil Blackwell] and The American Sublime (2011). Carter’s last completed orchestral work, Instances (2012), was premiered by the Seattle Symphony in February 2013. His final work, Epigrams (2012) for piano trio [performed by New Music Concerts on December 11, 2014], was premiered at the Aldeburgh Festival in June 2013.

— Courtesy of The Amphian Foundation

Elliott Carter (USA 1908-2012) — Canon for Three Equal Instruments (1971)

In response to the composer’s death on April 6, 1971, the British music journal Tempo devoted one entire issue and part of another to tributes of various sorts to Stravinsky. In addition to the photographs reminiscences, and musical analyses, several composers, including Carter, contributed to a series of “Canons and Epitaphs,” which appeared in the summer and autumn issues. Lasting under two minutes, Carter’s Canon for 3 is one of the most concise, spare, and focused works in the collection. It calls for an ensemble of three equal and unspecified instruments, all playing in the same range. The first voice begins the canon, stating the five-bar theme all alone. The second voice enters with a presentation of the canonic material inverted, and transposed up a tritone. The third voice then enters with a line
identical to the one that started the piece, against counterpoint in voices one and two. At the conclusion of player three’s statement, the canon takes an interesting and sonically striking twist. The canon subject appears again, but only as a composite of tones appearing across all three lines. While the attacks of the notes outline the exact shape of the canon subject, the original durations are not observed. This creates a startling variation on familiar material, as if the ink used to pen the subject was beginning to run across the page, causing the constituent voices of the canon to be subsumed into the subject itself — perhaps a lingering symbol of Stravinsky’s passage into immortality.

— Jeremy Grimshaw, allmusic.com

Tonight’s performance of the Canon for Three Equal Instruments will be presented in a special arrangement that Carter made in Avignon, France for Robert Aitken which has never been heard in North America.

The music of American composer Scott Rubin (b.1989) stems from negotiating relationships between the physical energy and movement required in sound production, peculiarities of auditory cognition and perception, and the discourse found when traversing different modes of music listening. He works in both acoustic and electroacoustic mediums. Rubin’s music has been played in the United States, Canada, France, Hong Kong, and Colombia by numerous ensembles and independent musicians. Currently, Rubin is a PhD student at the University of California at Berkeley where he studies with Franck Bedrossian, Edmund Campion, Cindy Cox and Ken Ueno. He is an active researcher at the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies. He recently earned his Masters degree studying with Philippe Leroux at McGill University in Montréal, Canada. Previously, he earned a Bachelor of Music in music composition and a Bachelor of Science in psychology at the University of Illinois. At McGill, Rubin worked as a composer for the Auditory Cognitive Neuroscience Lab under Robert Zatorre, where he composed music to be used in music cognition experiments. Rubin has also studied music cognition at the Institute for Music and Brain Science. Rubin is co-founder and co-organizer for the Montréal Contemporary Music Lab. He also performs improvised guitar with Speakeasy Electro Swing Montreal.

— scottrubinmusic.com

Scott Rubin (USA 1989) — less than equals three (2015)

After a cool spring and summer of slow and even ripening, the harvest brought days of heat. The vines responded to the heat as native desert flowers to moisture with a rush of development. The grapes had a long life on the vines because of the cool spring, while the late heat brought them to glorious fruition. This produced sensations with complex, internal development of fruit overlaid with supple, fleshy texture. — Scott Rubin

For four decades, until recently, Mississippi-born, New York-raised John Luther Adams lived and worked within earshot of the Alaskan Pacific Ocean. “My music has always been profoundly influenced by the natural world and a strong sense of place. Through sustained listening to the subtle resonances of the northern soundscape, I hope to explore the territory of sonic geography —that region between place and culture. . . between environment and imagination.” His symphonic work *Become Ocean* won the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for music and a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Classical Composition. A death metal website, [steelforbrains.com](http://steelforbrains.com), praised it as ‘doom as all hell.’ *The Wind in High Places* grew out of three pieces for solo violin written in 2007 as a memorial to the musician and environmentalist he describes below. Its opening movement portrays the distant horizon of a wide, open Alaskan landscape, somewhat like a contemporary northern counterpart to the distinctive archetypal sound world of Aaron Copland’s landscapes. Technically, the second movement is a tempo canon, with staggered entrances of the same musical material played at different speeds. The intensity of this visceral music rises and falls in a broad arc. In the third movement, Adams uses the sonorous resonance of open strings for a scene titled *Looking Toward Hope*. The scene is also, arguably, a metaphor from the environmentalist-composer. The vast passacaglia of sound, anchored by the lowest open strings, seems to express what *could be or might have been* in the beautiful, natural landscape.

*John Luther Adams* writes: “Gordon Wright was the friend of a lifetime. For 30 years, Gordon and I shared our two greatest passions: music and Alaska. Gordon was my musical collaborator, my next-door neighbour, my fellow environmentalist and my camping buddy. *The Wind in High Places* is a triptych evoking special moments and places in our friendship. Over the years, I’ve utilized string quartet in several large ensemble works. But, at the age of 59, I finally composed my first string quartet. I’ve long been enamoured with the ethereal tones of Aeolian harps — instruments that draw their music directly from the wind. *The Wind in High Places* treats the string quartet as a large, 16-stringed harp. All the sounds in the piece are produced as natural harmonics or on open strings. Over the course of almost 20 minutes, the fingers of the musicians never touch the fingerboards of the instruments. If I could’ve found a way to make this music without them touching the instruments at all, I would have.”


Adams and Zorn were both born in 1953. “I used to look at composing music as problem solving,” New York composer John Zorn said in a 60th birthday interview. “As I get older, it’s not about problem solving anymore. There are no solutions, because there are no problems. You just turn the tap and it flows out.” A key figure on New York’s Lower East Side Downtown scene for nearly four decades, Zorn’s prolific musical catalogue crosses just about every musical boundary imaginable. His work as composer, improver, saxophonist, music producer, record label owner (Tzadik) and performance space owner (The Stone) helps his own compositions and those of creative musicians who share his all-embracing philosophy find an audience. His creative work also draws from sources beyond music, including visual art, literature, theatre, film, philosophy, alchemy, and mysticism. “The job of a composer is putting something down on a piece of paper that will inspire the person who’s playing,” he says.

*John Zorn* writes: “*The Remedy of Fortune* is divided into six tableaux depicting the changing fortunes of romantic love: pain, desire, devotion, hope, beauty, longing, ecstasy, intoxication, frustration, anger, despair and more. Referencing
both Bartók and Machaut, it explores a variety of different sound worlds and is a mature, subtle work, more economical and less flamboyant than The Alchemist or Necronomicon, but with just as wide an emotional range. Remedy is my sixth quartet and, like Bartók's sixth, each of the six movements (tableaux) begins with a kind of *mesto* which then morphs into a kaleidoscope of contrary emotions, moods, tone colours and tempi. Named for Machaut's 14th century poem (4,300 lines about courtly love), the piece was written in January 2015 and premièred at the mediaeval wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters by the Jack Quartet.”

**RODERICUS (fl. late 14th century) arr. Christopher Otto Angelorum psalat**

The French composer we know simply as Rodericus (or, backwards, S. Uciredor) is believed to have written the Latin ballad *Angelorum psalat* in the 1390s. *Angelorum psalat tripudium musicorum pandens armoniam . . . Let the rejoicing of the angels give praise in song, diffusing the consonance of the musicians.*

Christopher Otto writes: “*Angelorum Psalat* is a strikingly original two-part Latin ballade from the Chantilly Codex, a collection of music from the *Ars Subtilior* style. It is the only surviving work of Rodericus, known in the codex as S. Uciredor. Many works of the *Ars Subtilior* (more subtle art) experiment with rhythmic and notational complexity, and *Angelorum Psalat* is one of the most extreme examples, using no fewer than 20 different vari-coloured note shapes. For my arrangement I have relied on the transcription of Nors S. Josephson, in whose interpretation the note shapes signify a radical expansion of rhythmic possibility, specifying a much richer variety of speeds and durations than most Western music before the 20th century. I have given the first violin and viola the original two parts, and added the second violin and cello parts to clarify the underlying grid of these complex rhythms.”


“Be Greek, be a mathematician, be an architect, and out of it all make music!” The advice came from French composer Olivier Messiaen to Iannis Xenakis, then a young trained engineer and architect working in Le Corbusier’s architectural studio. Wounded in action as a member of the communist resistance, Xenakis fled his homeland with a death sentence from the post-war Greek government in effect until 1974. He worked with the famous French architect from 1947-59, all the while developing his own methods of musical composition, initially based on mathematical models of disorder. ST/4, his earliest string quartet, derived from an orchestral piece ST/10, itself derived via an algorithm of his own creation, realised on one of the few (maybe the only) computers that France had to offer in 1962, at the headquarters of IBM-France in Paris. Over 20 years later *Tetrás*, his second quartet, is not only the longest of his four string quartets, but the most thought-provoking. *Tetrás* (an ancient Greek word for four) employs the quartet, for the most part, as a single vast instrument, rather than four individual instrumentalists. The ground-breaking work is divided into nine sections, each of which explores a specific sound from an exuberant catalogue of sounds. Many of them are seemingly elemental and uninhibited, like the zigzag glissandi that open the work. Others are more delicately drawn and precise. Stochastic processes, drawn from probability theory, work together to achieve structured climaxes. The music, including the recurring glissandi, builds to a dramatic structure that invites repeated listening. “In contrast to many experimental scores, nothing goes on an instant too long,” wrote critic Alex Ross in *The New Yorker*. “*Tetrás* is a late-twentieth-century masterpiece, worthy of comparison to the quartets of Berg, Ives, Bartók, and Shostakovich.”

From the performer’s perspective, cellist Kevin McFarland writes: “A nagging voice tells me I could be producing the same sonic result if my technique were more focused and my energies more direct, in other words if my body was much more relaxed and everything was functioning like a well-oiled machine. However, in a handful of performances where I have attempted to do this, the result was somehow deeply unsatisfying. To give a successful performance of *Tetrás* I have become convinced that I must give literally everything I have, so that after the intensely loud and explosive tremolo glissandi towards the end of the piece, when the dynamic drops drastically and the tempo asymptotically approaches complete stillness, the energy dissipates in a way that is not entirely controlled but somehow dissolves into space.”

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Pierre Boulez 1925-2016
by Paul Griffiths

Pierre Boulez was a dominant figure in classical music for well over six decades, and with his passing, on January 5, we lose the last of that extraordinary generation of European composers who came to the forefront during the few years after the Second World War, still in their twenties. They wanted to change music radically, and Boulez took a leading role among them. His Le Marteau sans maître (1952-5) was one of this avant-garde’s first major achievements, and remains a key work of modern music.

Gradually, he came to give more attention to conducting, where his keen ear and rhythmic incisiveness would often produce a startling clarity. In the 1960s he began to appear regularly with some of the world’s great orchestras, including the Concertgebouw, the Berlin Philharmonic, and the Cleveland Orchestra. In 1971 he became music director simultaneously of the New York Philharmonic and the B.B.C. Symphony in London.

As a young man he had matched intelligence with great force of mind: he had known what had to be done, according to his reading of history, and he had done it, in defiance of all the norms in French musical culture at the time. To be a conductor, though, meant working with the existing machinery. He tried to remake that machinery; he tried, especially when he held the principal posts in New York and London, to explore unconventional repertory, unconventional concert formats, and unconventional locations. But he also accepted that he had to rethink some of his own preconceptions, and as his musical outlook broadened, so his output as a composer dwindled.
It was his reputation as an avant-garde composer and as a crusader for new music that prompted his unexpected appointment as musical director of the New York Philharmonic, succeeding Leonard Bernstein. After the initial shock at his arrival, there was hope that he might “bring the orchestra into the twentieth century” and appeal to younger audiences. He left quietly six years later.

His destination was Paris. Dismissive of the French musical establishment, he had spent most of the last two decades abroad, but President Georges Pompidou, keen to reclaim this native son, agreed to found a contemporary-music facility for him in the capital: the Institute for the Research and Coordination of Acoustics and Music, known as IRCAM, having its own 31-piece orchestra, the Ensemble Intercontemporain. In the 1980s he gained further government support for his grandest project, the Cité de la Musique complex in the Villette district of Paris, housing the Paris Conservatoire, a concert hall, and an instrument museum.

Boulez was born on March 26, 1925, in Montbrison, a town near Lyon, the son of an industrialist. He studied the piano, and in his teens began to compose. A defining moment came when he heard a broadcast of Stravinsky’s _Chant du rossignol_ conducted by Ernest Ansermet; it was a work to which he often returned throughout his conducting career. Against the wishes of his father, who wanted him to study engineering, he went to Paris in 1942 and enrolled at the Conservatoire.

In 1943-4 he was in the harmony class of Olivier Messiaen, whose impact on him was decisive. Messiaen’s teaching went far beyond traditional harmony to embrace music that was outlawed both by the stagnant Conservatoire of that period and by the German occupying forces: the music of Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartók, and Webern. Messiaen also introduced his students to medieval music and the music of Asia and Africa. Boulez felt his course was set; but he also knew he needed to go further into the twelve-note method that Schoenberg had introduced a generation before.

“I had to learn about that music, to find out how it was made,” he once told Opera News. “It was a revelation — a music for our time, a language with unlimited possibilities. No other language was possible. It was the most radical revolution since Monteverdi. Suddenly, all out familiar notions were abolished. Music moved out of the world of Newton and into the world of Einstein.”

To start on this route he took lessons in 1945-6 with a Schoenbergian who had settled in Paris, René Leibowitz. Soon, in works including his mighty Second Piano Sonata (1947-8), he was integrating what had been separate paths of development in the music of the previous forty years: Schoenberg’s twelve-note serialism with Stravinsky’s rhythmic innovations and Messiaen’s enlarged notion of mode. As he saw it, all these composers had failed to pursue their most radical impulses, and it fell to a new generation —specifically, to him — to pick up the torch.

But though he was outspoken about his historical role, he was much warier of talking about expression. There was the odd reference to Antonin Artaud; there was also an admitted kinship with the abrupt-sensuous poetry of René Char, which he set in _Le Marteau_ and other works. But he was also capable of ferocious abstraction, as in the first section of his _Structures_ for two pianos (1951), a test case in applying serial principles to rhythm, volume, and color. About his private life he remained tightly guarded. His elder sister Jeanne was important to him; few others were able to break through his reserve.

To begin with, he earned his living as musical director of the theater company in Paris run by Jean-Louis Barrault and Madeleine Renaud, Barrault’s wife. His ten-year appointment with them was crowned in 1955 by a production of the _Oresteia_ of Aeschylus, for which he wrote an ambitious score; they also helped him set up the Domaine Musical concerts in 1953.

The Domaine Musical, designed as a platform for new music, twentieth-century classics, and early music that was then little performed, proved his abilities as administrator and, later, conductor. It also provided a model of the contemporary ensemble that was widely imitated and has remained central to the propagation of new music.

He made his debut as a concert conductor on March 21, 1956, at a Domaine Musical concert (though the organization was still known then as the “Concerts du Petit Marigny,” after the theater in Paris in which the concerts took place). The program included _Le Marteau_, which had received its first performance the previous summer in Baden-Baden. At once delectable and stringent, this work united traditions of Austro-German discipline and French finesse with the sounds of South America, Africa, and east Asia made available by its variegated ensemble (comprising alto flute, viola, guitar and percussion besides contralto voice). It was widely admired — not least by Stravinsky, who heard it when Boulez made his North American debut at the Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles on March 11, 1957.

Boulez’s first concert in the Western hemisphere — also his first with a symphony orchestra — had come in June 1956, when he had conducted the Orquestra Sinfónica Venezuela on one of his last tours with the Renaud-Barrault company. During the 1957-8 season he appeared with the West German Radio Symphony in Cologne in his own _Le Visage nuptial_ and Stockhausen’s _Gruppen_. He then began a lasting connection with the South-West German Radio Symphony of Baden-Baden, where he made his home. In 1960 he conducted them in the first performance of his _Pli selon pli_, an hour-long setting of poems by Mallarmé for soprano with an orchestra rich in percussion.
This lustrous score allowed certain flexibilities to the conductor in assembling its fragments, and in other works of the same period — the Third Piano Sonata (1957) and the second book of Structures for two pianos (1956–61) — he took such openness further. The musical work should be, as he often said, a labyrinth, with no fixed route. It might also never gain a fixed ending. From this time onward, he went on starting more works than he ever brought to completion, while at the same time submitting older pieces to rounds of revision.

As a conductor, he showed much less hesitation. Where his first concerts had been devoted entirely to twentieth-century works, with the Concertgebouw and the South-West German Radio Symphony in the early 1960s he began to explore earlier repertory: Haydn, Bach, Schubert, Mozart, Beethoven. In March 1965 he made his debut with an American orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, in a typical program comprising Rameau, his own music (Figures-Doubles-Prismes), Debussy, and Stravinsky (Chant du rossignol).

The next year he conducted opera for the first time: Wozzeck in Frankfurt and Paris, and Parsifal at Bayreuth, both the Parsifal and the Frankfurt Wozzeck being with Wieland Wagner directing. Also in 1966 he started making recordings for Columbia, for whom his first releases included Wozzeck and albums of Debussy and Messiaen.

He reached his first peak as a conductor in the 1960s. He had learned his technique, he said, by observing two predecessors: Roger Désormière in Paris and Hans Rosbaud in Baden-Baden. But his style was unique. He never used the baton, but manipulated the orchestra by means of his two hands simultaneously, the left indicating phrasing or (in much contemporary music) counter-rhythm.

His characteristic sound — unemotional on the surface but with undercurrents of intemperateness, at once brilliant in colour and rhythmically disciplined — suited his core repertory of Stravinsky (several of whose works he introduced to Europe), Debussy, Webern, Bartók and Messiaen, and was refreshing in many of the excursions he took into earlier music. It was a sound that depended on his famously acute ear: there are countless stories of him detecting faulty intonation from the third oboe in a complex orchestral texture.

As music director of the New York Philharmonic, he had to enlarge his repertory rapidly. Hitherto he had conducted very little Romantic music other than Berlioz’s; now Schubert, Brahms, Dvořák, and Borodin joined his programs, not always convincingly. Though he refused to compromise on Tchaikovsky, he was becoming much more like a regular conductor, and part of his individuality was lost in the colossal task of maintaining important positions on both sides of the Atlantic — and, in 1976, preparing the Bayreuth centenary Ring.

He also had to contend in New York with hostility to his programming. He wanted to make the orchestra a more flexible institution, and a more modern one. Performances might begin with short programs of chamber music, played by members of the orchestra. More of the repertory would be explored: during his first season as the Philharmonic’s music director there was an emphasis on Liszt. Then, in order to present more contemporary music, concerts entirely of new and recent works were given at downtown venues. There were “informal evenings” of talk, rehearsal, and performance featuring twentieth-century composers. And there were summer seasons of “rug concerts,” with a different program every night for a week, played to audiences seated on the floor of Philharmonic Hall.

The “rug concerts” lasted only two years, and none of his other innovations survived his departure. He had relinquished his post with the B.B.C. Symphony in 1975, leaving as parting gift his somber Rite of Spring. His last concerts with the New York Philharmonic were in May 1977: on the program was Berlioz’s Damnation of Faust. He went back regularly to conduct in London, but he made no return to the New York Philharmonic podium until 1986.

His priority after the New York Philharmonic was IRCAM, and he drastically reduced his conducting commitments; among the few he retained was the first complete performance of Berg’s Lulu in 1979, at the Paris Opera. Believing that music’s development since 1945 had been frustrated by a lack of research into electronic possibilities, he set to work at IRCAM on Répons, for a small orchestra with six percussion soloists whose sounds are digitally transformed and regenerated. The work had its first performance in October 1981.

The irony was that the man who had such an extraordinary orchestral imagination — and such extraordinary powers to realize the fruits of that imagination in performance — should have been so convinced of his need for electronic resources. Répons is in most respects inferior to a work for a similar percussion-based orchestra he had begun and abandoned a decade before: Eclat/Multiples. Nor does it begin to rival the orchestral virtuosity displayed in the arrangements of his early piano cycle “Notations” that he began to make at the same time.

He continued to add to Répons during the early 1980s, though much of his creative energy was going into new versions of old scores. In the early 1990s he emerged from his tumult of rewriting to produce at IRCAM the greatest of his late works, a new version of... explosante-fixe... — a composition kit that was his memorial to Stravinsky — for electronic flute and small orchestra.

Also in the early 1990s he began to appear more widely again as a conductor, with orchestras in the United States (Los Angeles, Cleveland, Chicago) and Europe, his concerts often associated with recording sessions for Deutsche Grammophon. He returned to what had always been his main repertory; he also
developed his newer enthusiasm for Mahler, and made occasional visits to territory he had not touched before: Richard Strauss, Bruckner, Scriabin, Janáček.

In 1995, his seventieth birthday year, he conducted his own and other twentieth-century music in London, Paris, Vienna, New York, Tokyo, Amsterdam, Brussels, and Chicago. In 2005 he spent his eightieth birthday in Berlin, which hosted a retrospective of his music. A few pieces were completed during this period, notably *Dérive* 2, a 45-minute score for eleven instruments that took almost two decades to reach its end point, in 2006. Many more projects remained unfinished, while others were never begun, like the opera on which he was to have collaborated first with Jean Genet and later with Heiner Muller.

Even so, the achievements contained in his published works and recordings are formidable, and his influence was incalculable. The tasks he took on were heroic: to continue the great adventure of musical modernism, and to carry with him the great musical institutions and the widest possible audience. He left a powerful example to his successors.

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**Pierre Boulez on *Incises* and *sur Incises***

I composed the piano piece *Incises* for the Umberto Micheli Piano Competition which is greatly supported by Maurizio Pollini. First I had in mind to transform this piece into a longer one for Pollini and a group of instrumentalists, a kind of piano concerto although without reference to the traditional form. And then when I began to really deal with the material – then I thought: no, that’s not really the way to do it. I would like a piano, a piano with a first shadow and a second shadow. With the piano in the middle, giving his material to both sides. Symmetrical, although this symmetry was more complex than I’m indicating now. At the beginning, however, it wasn’t complex at all. Now at the beginning I wanted to have a sonority to enrich the piano’s sonority, really also to treble the sonority of the piano or repeat the sonority of the piano. So I added the harps, three harps. And then I started on the marimba, because the marimba begins to introduce the quick thematic material. Finally I said to myself that if I have a marimba, I also need a vibraphone for the high register. And then the second vibraphone came at the last minute, because I could not find another instrument in the percussion section capable of matching the vibraphone and the marimba. So I had the vibraphone there, and then I went on to add steel drums, timpani, chimes ... and that’s how the percussion is set up: one player on instruments which are totally chromatic, and one on instruments which are, let’s say, specialized. Consequently my starting point was three pianos, three harps, three percussionists; also three times three which is nine. And I composed this piece for the 90th birthday of Paul Sacher although this, you have to believe me, is pure coincidence. I did not choose nine instruments on purpose.

[The piece is based on a] series of six pitches that was given to me for an homage to Paul Sacher for his 70th birthday. For this I wrote *Messagesquisses*, which was very short, because it was meant to be played in a concert for which a great many composers had written very short works. So it was a short occasional piece. And it was while working on this piece that I finally discovered all of this chord’s possibilities. I noticed progressively, while I was working on it, that there were possibilities I’d never used before. I mean by this that the point was not to make reference to Paul Sacher each time – certainly not, although *sur Incises* is dedicated to him. But I did not really write *sur Incises* just to dedicate it to him – I wrote it because the material was there, and because I asked myself what I would do with this material.

[The solo piano piece] *Incises* begins with a very free and flexible introduction followed by a very, very quick part (which is at times abruptly interrupted). But the character of this terrific movement is kept throughout. In *sur Incises* I have expanded, stretched this introduction a lot in terms of its duration. And I have added various forms of multiplication to this very brilliant cadenza, from simple to sixfold and multiple reflections resulting in a cadenza which is no longer wild as in Incises, but calm and breathing regularly, due to these diverse figures appearing in simple to complex modifications. So I have composed a cadenza for everybody, which is to be played without interruption at a very rapid speed and which is very difficult to perform. And then there is another part with a transition. In this part the principles of the cadenza are mixed with the introduction, this very free introduction actually in a rather complete way so that it is very difficult to judge which elements are taken from which area. This situation changes with a recollection of the initial cadenza focusing on the three pianos in order to demonstrate on which kind of periodicity the complete action is based. The first page of *sur Incises* provides half of the piece, as a matter of fact, because the material is very simple. You have resonant material and quick material. And the process is to mix both of them or not to mix them: at the beginning they are not mixed, and throughout the second half of the piece they are. And then the object is always finding a way to have the dialogue between quick and resonant, that being the material – it plays its novelty each time, and you recognize it, more or less.
The percussion and also the harps are at times completely integrated and sometimes only play a minor role, it depends. There is one section where the pianos play an elaborate ostinato passage, thus a very strict compositional structural form while the percussionists play very free figures at the same time. But you find also moments when this role play is divided up, such that one piano and one percussionist play the free structures whereas the other pianos and percussionists have to follow the strict ostinato movement etc. Another attractive aspect is that at times you encounter very quick changes followed by sections of constant continuous instrumental combinations. As to the harps, [their] entries depend a lot on the different kinds of speed at which this instrument can be handled. I was very surprised by the powerful sound three harps can produce. At the beginning [they are] simply a kind of echo of the piano, [gradually] participating in the sonority and at the very end they are every bit as important as the piano, because the chords they have are very strong in the middle, and then you hear that middle register more strongly than even the extreme power of the piano. By the way, I have emphasized the different sound character of the instruments by positioning them in a characteristic way. Thus, you can see what you hear. I am really very happy with the sound combinations in this piece and also with the way the rather exotic instruments are integrated. I don’t use steel drums for the sake of their exotic and folkloric colour but because of the fact that they exceed the usual bounds of the individual families of instruments. I like the sound of steel drums because of their innate possibilities: first in terms of the sound itself, but also because when you do a crescendo, or a very strong sforzato, you have a resonance which is very interesting in and of itself, because the sound is so modified that it ends up being practically another sound. The question is what does that mean? Because this sound belongs to all families and to none at the same time.

Canadian composer Howard Bashaw (b. 1957) is originally from White Rock, B.C. A graduate of the University of British Columbia (DMA, 1989), he joined the Department of Music at the University of Alberta in 1993. Prior to this he taught at the University of British Columbia and the Université Canadienne en France. Working almost exclusively in the acoustic medium, Bashaw’s repertoire ranges from solo instruments to full orchestra. His musical language is perhaps best described as being broadly contemporary, and his scores exist in various conventional, aleatoric, graphic and hybrid formats. Forming a separate category, his signature works for solo piano are typically virtuosic and large in scope.

Bashaw has received commissions through the Canada Council for the Arts, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, and the CBC Radio Music Department. Premiering ensembles include: Vancouver New Music, New Music Concerts (Toronto), Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, The Hard Rubber Orchestra, The Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, The Now Age Orchestra, the Hammerhead Consort, Standing Wave Ensemble, Duo Majoya, Duo Kovalis, The Eastwest Quartet, The Augustana Choir, and The Continuum Ensemble (London, UK). Works for solo piano were premiered by: Roger Admiral, Winston Choi, Marc Couroux, Douglas Finch, Corey Hamm, Kyoko Hashimoto, Barbara Pritchard and Haley Simons. Other premiering or featured performers include: Trevor Brandenburg, Kathleen Corcoran, Niek de Groot, David Harding, Tatjana Kukoc, Catherine Lewis, Giorgio Magnanensi, Dennis Miller, Ken Read, Yan Sallafranque, Allen Stiles, William Street, Guillaume Tardif, Alain Trudel, Russell Whitehead and Cameron Wilson.

Compilation CD releases include: 15 for Piano (Centrediscs, 2015, Roger Admiral, piano), Hard Rubber, Hard Elastic (Arktos, 2008, various artists), Form Archimage (Arktos, 2004, various artists), and Bashaw (Arktos, 2000, various artists).


I. Badass Toccata for Conductor (2:40)

II. mirrors warp and echoes clash, yet A runs and runs still (3:45)

III. Paired and Re-Paired:
   Austere Levity in Fugitive, Time-Table Sprites (0:50)

IV. Two Double Homages (4:00)
   Nº. 1 Gabrieli and Nancarrow
   Circular Reasoning - Time, and Time Again
   Nº. 2 Gabrieli and Escher
   Endless Steps - Allusion and Illusion

V. Fraction and Refraction:
   Color Organ, Stained Glass, and Puzzling Aleatory (c. 4:00)

VI. Feat and Defeat:
   Party Automatons Get A Round (4:15) – featuring the Rick Sacks percussion conveyor belt
VII. Hark and Hearken:  
Reminiscence Round (2:15)

VIII. I dunno, retro-minimalism maybe (6:25)

IX. A Modern Dance Conspiracy (4:40)

Stylistically, a rather unlikely collection of colourfully contrasting movements is gathered under the title Postmodern Counterpoint. “Postmodern”? Sure. After all, diverging arguments could be made for an inclusive aesthetic position that is, at once, forward-looking, backward-looking, and at various, nebulous points in between. And should such debate ever occur (along with its varying opinions), all could agree nonetheless that the work has at least three referential characteristics: 1) imitative counterpoint is prevalent; 2) the 5-choir division of the ensemble features antiphonal brass and reflects changing contrapuntal textures; and 3) the Rick Sacks percussion conveyor belt is strikingly unconventional and memorable.

Antiphonal dialogues arise from contrapuntal textures; counterpoint arises from the compositional technique of canon; and the paradox of unifying contrast arises from canon manifesting in various and unusual forms over all 9 movements. Movement 2 (mirrors warp and echoes clash) includes displaced, reverberating echo canons. Movement 3 (Paired and Re-Paired) is the realization of a complex table canon (the peculiar, cryptic notation of a brief, single-voice theme that, when read forwards, backwards, upside-down and in different clefs, simultaneously generates transposition, retrograde, and inversion - and here even multiple speeds are added). Movement 4 (Two Double Homages) contains a complex, 4-voice temporal canon (proportional, simultaneous speeds), and an interwoven, ascending-descending double-spiral canon. Movement 5 (Fraction and Refraction) is a puzzle canon, but here taking the unusual, even bizarre, twist of also being an aleatoric canon (a short double-theme presented at all 12 transposition levels and at 3 speeds - but here notated in graphic format as a full-color, stained glass window). Movement 6 (Feat and Defeat) includes a linked, revolving canon (indeed, what else could accompany a conveyor belt?). Movement 7 (Hark and Hearken) contains a paired, 4-voice traditional canon. Both movements 8 and 9 (I dunno and Modern Dance Conspiracy) include what I refer to as textural canons (bearing certain similarities to aspects of minimalism). Leaving only the blazing Badass Toccata for Conductor; while this first movement also contains canonic writing, its focus is clearly distinct from the other movements, and its title, well, just plain says it all.

Now, admittedly, this apparent preoccupation with canon and counterpoint could easily give the impression that the music is much more concerned with rational strategies and controlling architectures than it is with immediate expressiveness and colourful atmospheres. Wrong. In fact, one could summarize effectively without even bothering to mention all that counterpoint: the music can be heard as having one foot in the classical and contemporary worlds, and the other - with its funky grooves and hard-driving orchestration - in that of the modern big-band.

Turning to the broader historical perspective, is it possible to compose for separate choirs and antiphonal brass without acknowledging, or at least remembering, the late Renaissance composer Giovanni Gabrieli? In this regard, Postmodern Counterpoint is homage to this composer - and to that remarkable, pivotal period he helped transform. Postmodern Counterpoint was commissioned through the Canada Council for the Arts by New Music Concerts, Toronto. — Howard Bashaw
45th season | 376th event
Sunday March 13, 2016
The Music Gallery, 197 John Street, Toronto
New Music Concerts and The Music Gallery present:

Quasar Saxophone Quartet
Marie-Chantal Leclair soprano sax Mathieu Leclair alto sax
André Leroux tenor sax Jean-Marc Bouchard baritone sax

Programme:

Jean-François Laporte (b1968)  
Incantation (15’) (2011)
for four “trompe-sax”

Jimmie Leblanc (b1977)  
Fil Rouge (15’) (2012)
for saxophone quartet

Wolf Edwards (b1972)  
Predator Drone MQ-1 (12’) (2013-14)
for saxophone quartet and electronics

— Intermission —

André Hamel (b1955)  
Brumes matinales et textures urbaines (18’) (2007)
for saxophone quartet and live electronics

— Presentation of the 2015 Jules Léger Prize to Pierre Alexandre Tremblay by Aimé Dontigny —

Pierre Alexandre Tremblay (b1975)  
Les pâleurs de la lune (20’) (2014)
for saxophone quartet and live electronics

Founder and artistic director of Productions Totem Contemporain, composer and instrument inventor Jean-François Laporte is known today on the international scene for his original undertakings. From works for traditional, invented and modified instruments to sound installations, Laporte’s work invariably stems from concrete experiments in sound matter that are based on active listening to each sound. Since the early days in 1993, Jean-François Laporte has written some sixty works that have been premiered and performed as much in Canada, Europe, Asia, and the United States. Alongside his activities as a composer, for the past seven years he has devoted himself partly to the development of new instruments (the tu-yo, bol, FlyingCan, trompe-sax, and orgue de sirènes) that he has used in his compositions and, since 2002, in his visual and sound installations. Laporte’s new instruments have earned him several commissions in Canada and abroad, and have sparked interest in various sectors of the international artistic community, as much in dance as in contemporary music. Other composers are increasingly using his instruments in their own music both for solo works and within traditional ensembles.

**Incantation** (2011)
for four “trompe-sax”

*Incantation* is in keeping with my work on *Procession* (2002) which was also a music in space creation to be adapted differently according to each performance location. This work uses the acoustic, scenic and theatrical possibilities of the place in order to emphasize and highlight them. *Incantation* offers the listener a different music experience by placing him in the middle of the sound continuum. — Jean-François Laporte

Jimmie LeBlanc was born in 1977 in urban Quebec, Canada. Influenced by pop and jazz, he was first trained as a guitarist, and then completed his studies in classical guitar. He continued his education in composition and analysis at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal, and is currently working on his doctorate at McGill University School of Music, honing his skills under the guidance of such composers as Brian Ferneyhough, Michaël Lévinas, and Philippe Leroux. His music has been played by Ensemble Contrechamps, Esprit Orchestra, Quatuor Bozzini, Pentadètre, Trio Fibonacci, Les Enfants Terribles, Hwaum Chamber Ensemble, Kore Ensemble, Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal and Nouvel Ensemble Moderne (NEM). Jimmie LeBlanc has composed original music and sound design for theater in Montreal, including Châteaux de la colère (2005), Blanc (2008), Judith (2011) and Genèse/O (2012). He also produced various soundtracks for commercials, TV and films at Apollo Studios in 2006-2007. In 2003, he did short films music for David Mollet’s Le Silence gourmand, and Gaudreault/Hizaji’s Continuum. In addition to teaching guitar and composition, LeBlanc co-produced Perdre Pied (2006), a performance-opera realized with artist Olivia Boudreau and based on a text by Jean-Sébastien Lemieux. He ranked as a finalist in the 4th Seoul International Competition for Composers in 2007, and did a residency at the GRAME during the biennial Musiques en Scène of Lyon where he also participated in the NEM’s 2008 Forum on Music for instruments and live electronics. His string quartet The Breaking of the Circle received 3rd prize in the International Composers’ Competition (Lutoslawski Award), 2008. Jimmie LeBlanc is also the winner of the 2009 Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music for the work L’Espace intérieur du monde.

Fil Rouge (2012) for saxophone quartet

In theatre, the term "red thread" means an invisible element, often implicit, which underlies the work, connecting all that is above (or below) the plot’s narrative mechanisms. Acting in the sphere of the unnamed, this concept seems eminently musical: what, fundamentally, makes a work an indivisible whole? An idea, an essence, an emotion? Music leads us to this level of abstraction, and this is from this stance that I’m trying to design musical figures rooted into sensation, imagined from the body, the body that performs, who hears, and thinks. In the case of Red Thread, it is red as a colour-sensation that was the "poetic attractor" at the origin of musical ideas. As we can wonder what is "red" in the middle of all its possible gradients, we are at the same time astonished by the infinite variety of sensations it suggests! The piece develops into a series of sequences featuring a musical action inspired by more or less paradoxical associations such as the rouge-carré [the “red square”, a Québec political symbol – ed.], blood-red, red-oblivion, liminal-red... fragments of the world seen through red...

— Jimmie LeBlanc

Fil Rouge was premiered on April 24 2012 in Montreal as part of the Méchants moineaux concert. The composition of the work was made possible with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.

Wolf Edwards (b. Montreal, 1972) began formal musical training at the Victoria Conservatory of Music (1994-1996) before transferring to the University of Victoria (1996-2000) where he completed an undergraduate degree in music composition and theory, with Prof. Christopher Butterfield, Dr. John Celona, Prof. Michael Longton, Dr. Harold Krebs, and classical guitar with Dr. Alexander Dunn. To further his education, Edwards relocated to Montreal, Quebec (2000-2002), where he attended private lessons in composition, theory, and analysis, with Gilles Tremblay. In 2002 Wolf was granted a two year University of Victoria Fellowship enabling him to complete the degree of Master of Music in 2004. Further studies include Acanthès Festival and Summer Academy in Metz, France, 2005 with composers Pascal Dusapin (France), Wolfgang Rhim (Germany), and Hilda Paredes (Mexico) and the Schloss Solitude Summer Academy in Stuttgart, Germany in 2007 with composers Chaya Czernowin (Israel), Stephen Kazuo Takasugi (U.S.A) and Ole Lutzw Holm (Norway/Sweden). Edwards has been the recipient of many awards and prizes including the Community Council Competition Competition 2006 (First Prize), Canada Council for the Arts/Canadian Broadcasting Corporation’s Jules Leger Competition for New Chamber Music 2005 (Third Prize), Molinari Quartet International 2002-2003 (Third Prize), Strings of the Future International Composition Competition 2001 (First Prize), the Vancouver Sonic Boom Prize (1998) and the Murray Adaskin Prize in Composition in 1997. Edwards has participated, lectured, and had his music performed in many international festivals, and events, throughout North America and Continental Europe. His works have been performed and/or commissioned by the Siemens Art Foundation of Germany, Newseap Ensemble (U.S.A.), Productions Totem Contemporain (Quebec), the SMQC (Quebec), the Arte Saxophone Quartet (Switzerland), Sixstrum Percussion Ensemble (Quebec), the Esprit Orchestra (Ontario), Ensemble Surplus (Germany), Arditti String Quartet (England), Molinari String Quartet (Quebec), Victoria Symphony (British Columbia), Aventa Ensemble (British Columbia), Sofia Soloists (Bulgaria), Quasar Quatuor de Saxophones (Quebec), Ensemble Contemporain de Montreal (Quebec), Ensemble Chorum (Quebec), Quatuor Bozzini (Quebec), the Tsilumos Ensemble (British Columbia) and the Western Front (British Columbia).
Predator Drone MQ-1 (2013, rev. 2014) for saxophone quartet and electronics

An unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) developed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the United States Airforce, and General Atomics in the early 1990s. Equipped with Hellfire missiles, the Predator Drone has been used to kill people in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bosnia, Serbia, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Somalia.

Despite claims from the administration that drone strikes have killed very few civilians, multiple independent reports (including the Columbia Law School’s Human Rights Institutions and The Bureau of Investigative Journalism) have proven that in fact 98% of drone strike casualties are civilians. That is 50 for every one “suspected terrorist.”

Predator Drone MQ-1 is dedicated to the Quasar Quatuor de Saxophones. — Wolf Edwards

Predator Drone MQ-1 was commissioned for Quasar by The Western Front with the assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts. The piece was premiered by Quasar on November 16, 2013 at The Western Front in Vancouver.

André Hamel has extensive experience in both composition and concert production, and in 1985 formed the Société des Concerts Alternatifs du Québec (Codes d’accès), which he served as president (1987-90), and as a member of the board of directors (1985-91; 1994-96). As project director for Codes D’accès, Hamel also laid the groundwork and helped realize Musiques-échange Québec-Belgique 1996. In 1992 he joined forces with two other composers to found Espaces sonores illimités, a group that focuses on the spatial aspects of concert presentation. He has been a member of the artistic committee of the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec (SMCQ) since September 2000. As a composer, André Hamel’s works have been performed regularly over the past two decades in Quebec, Canada and Europe, with pieces commissioned by a number of Québécois and international music organizations including the SMCQ, the Ensemble Nahandove (Brussels), the Polyrhythmia percussion ensemble (Bulgaria), Société Radio-Canada, the Pointe-à-Callière Museum, the Canadian Music Centre, Théâtre La Chapelle in Montreal, the Morel-Nemish piano duo, and the French cellist Benjamin Carat. He was also one of 18 Quebec composers involved in creating the Millennium Symphony (June 2000). Hamel’s awards include a special mention for his orchestral work L’absurde travail at the Goffredo Petrassi International Competition for Composers (Italy, 1997), the Conseil québécois de la musique’s 1998 Prix Opus in the “Premiere of the Year” category, and the 2000 Joseph S. Stauffer Award given by the Canada Council for the Arts. A former artist-in-residence at Le Studio du Québec in New York City (2003), Hamel’s current projects include the music for a collaborative, multi-disciplinary work entitled Urnos, realized with Bernard Arcand, Martine Beaulne, Claire Gignac et Guy Laramée.

Brumes matinales et textures urbaines (2007) for saxophone quartet and live electronics

After a night of pleasures and sensual delight, they were forced from their morning languor. They proceeded to shower, dress, take a cup of coffee, eat and then without saying a word, rush into the daily whirlwind of human activity.

— André Hamel

Commissioned by Quasar with the financial assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts, Brumes matinales et textures urbaines was premiered on March 28 2007 as part of their Ondes de chocs concert.

Pierre Alexandre Tremblay is a composer and a performer on bass guitar and sound processing devices, in solo and within the groups ars circa musicae (Paris, France), de type inconnu (Montréal, Québec), and Splice (London, England, UK). He is a member of the London-based collective Loop. His music is released by Empreintes DIGITALes and Ora. He formally studied composition with Michel Têteaulet, Marcelle Deschénes, and Jonty Harrison, bass guitar with Jean-Guy Larin, Sylvain Bolduc, and Michel Donato, analysis with Michel Longtin and Stéphane Roy, studio technique with Francis Dhomont, Robert Normandeau, and Jean Piché. Pierre Alexandre Tremblay is Professor in Composition and Improvisation at the University of Huddersfield (England, UK) where he also is Director of the Electronic Music Studios. He previously worked in popular music as producer and bassist, and is interested in video music and coding. He likes spending time with his family, drinking oolong tea, gazing at dictionaries, reading prose, and taking long walks. As a founding member of the no-tv collective, he does not own a working television set.
**Les pâleurs de la lune** (2014) for saxophone quartet and live electronics

« Et je me demandais si je veillais ou si je dormais, - si c’étaient les pâleurs de la lune ou de Lucifer, - si c’était minuit ou le point du jour ! »

« Mais bientôt mon oreille n’interrogea plus qu’un silence profond. »
— extraits du troisième livre des Fantaisies de Gaspard de la Nuit, Aloïsius Bertrand [1824]

So much beauty surrounds us, when we give it time! Often it emerges from a simple meeting, easily ignored. At a second glance, it will yield its deep nature, full of beauty and richness. So many nuances emerge when we allow ourselves to contemplate the moon! — Pierre Alexandre Tremblay

**Les pâleurs de la lune** was commissioned by Quasar with the assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts.

Awarded annually, the **Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music** is a competition for Canadian composers that is designed to encourage the creation of new chamber music and to foster its performance by Canadian chamber groups. The $7,500 prize was established in 1978 by the Right Honourable Jules Léger, then Governor General of Canada.

The competition for the prize is administered by the Canada Council for the Arts. The Canada Council also funds the award, selects and manages the peer assessment committee and promotes the winner. CBC/Radio-Canada broadcasts the winning composition.

The Jules Léger Prize has the distinction of being the only Canadian award available to classical composers at any stage of their careers. Since its inception in 1978 with the awarding of the prize to R. Murray Schafer, winners have included such notables as Bruce Mather, Serge Garant, John Rea, Brian Cherney, Linda Catlin Smith, James Rolfe, Alexina Louie, Nicole Lizée, André Ristic, Zosha di Castri and Thierry Tidrow. We are proud to note that two New Music Concerts commissions have been honoured with the award – **Zwei Lieder nach Rilke** by Omar Daniel and Chris Paul Harman’s **Amerika** – and that we also gave the premiere performance of Christos Hatzis’ winning work **Erotikos Logos**.

Known for their energy and bold innovation, the four members of the **Quasar Saxophone Quartet** — Marie-Chantal Leclair, Mathieu Leclair, André Leroux, Jean-Marc Bouchard — have been exploring the innumerable facets of musical creation since the group’s founding in 1994. Their repertoire is vast in range, including chamber music, improvisation, musical theatre, and most particularly over the past ten years mixed music featuring live electronics, an area in which they are now recognized as leaders.

Five-time winners of the Québec Music Council’s distinguished OPUS awards, Quasar presents an annual concert series in Montréal while performing extensively across Canada, the United States and Europe. The quartet reserves pride of place for a group of esteemed Canadian and International composers with whom it has formed lasting partnerships. It aims to contribute to the enrichment of our musical heritage and to provide a platform for new music experimentation, exploration and production.

Quasar has proudly commissioned over one hundred works over the course of its twenty years of activity. During that time it has performed as a solo group with, among others, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. Member of Le Vivier and of the Canadian New Music Network, Quasar is supported by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, the Socan Foundation and Vandoren.
45th season | 377th event
Sunday April 3, 2016
Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis Street, Toronto

New Music Concerts presents

Viva Electronica
NMC Ensemble | Robert Aitken director

Programme:

Keith Hamel (Canada1956)  Dreamer (2016)
Dianne Aitken flute Keith Atkinson oboe Max Christie clarinet Rick Sacks percussion Stephen Clarke piano
Timothy Ying violin Douglas Perry viola David Hetherington cello Robert Aitken direction
World premiere, commissioned by New Music Concerts

Xin Wang soprano Wallace Halladay saxophone Gregory Oh sound files
Text used with the permission of The John Cage Trust

Anthony Tan (Canada1978)  On the Sensations of Tone II (2016)
Max Christie bass clarinet Peter Lutek bassoon Chris Gongos horn David Schotzko percussion
Stephen Clarke piano Douglas Perry viola David Hetherington cello Adam Scime contrabass
Anthony Tan electronics Robert Aitken direction
World premiere, commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of The Canada Council

— Intermission —

So Jeong Ahn (South Korea 1956)  LOL (2012/2015)
Gregory Oh piano Anthony Tan sound files

Paul Steenhuisen (Canada1965)  Vajrayana Tantra Shift (2016)
Dianne Aitken flute Keith Atkinson oboe Max Christie clarinet Peter Lutek bassoon Chris Gongos horn
Rick Sacks, David Schotzko percussion Gregory Oh piano Timothy Ying violin Douglas Perry viola
David Hetherington cello Adam Scime contrabass Paul Steenhuisen electronics Robert Aitken direction
World premiere, commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of The Canada Council

Viva Electronica was made possible thanks to the generous support of Roger D. Moore.

Keith Hamel is a Professor in the School of Music and Director of the Computer Music Studio at the University of British Columbia. He has written both acoustic and electroacoustic music and has been awarded many prizes in both media. Many of his recent compositions focus on interaction between live performers and computer-controlled electronics. His works have been performed by many of the finest soloists and ensembles both in Canada and abroad. He has received commissions from IRCAM (Paris), the Ensemble Intercontemporain, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Windsor Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver New Music Ensemble, the Elektra Women’s Choir, Musica Intima, New Music Concerts (Toronto), Hammerhead Consort, Standing Wave, Hard Rubber Orchestra, Nu:BC as well as from outstanding performers such as flutist Robert Crum, bassoonist Jesse Read, clarinetists Jean-Guy Boisvert and François Houle, saxophonist Julia Nolan, trombonists Jeremy Berkman and Benny Sluchin, and pianists Douglas Finch, Megumi Masaki, Jane Hayes and Corey Hamm.

Keith Hamel is the former Vice-President of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM), a former President of the Canadian Music Centre, and a former board member of the Canadian League of Composers. His music is published by Art Music Promotion (AMP) and by Cypress Press (Vancouver.)

Keith Hamel (Canada1956)  Dreamer (2016)

Dreamer is based on material deconstructed from two sources. The first is the 1963 speech given by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the Lincoln Memorial - the famous “I Have a Dream” speech. The second is the 1971 song Imagine by John Lennon. There is a strong connection between these two men and their messages. Both dreamed of a future world where peace, tolerance and equality among all people would become a reality. Both were activists and pacifists, and both were murdered. It is now almost half a century since these men imagined their better world, yet there is probably more conflict, injustice and intolerance in the world than ever.
I performed spectral analyses of Martin Luther King’s speech and John Lennon’s music. These sonic structures form the harmonic and melodic material used throughout Dreamer. You might hear vague references to the melodic contours of King’s speech or to the harmonies of Lennon’s music, but these references are heavily obscured and distorted – much like their dreams that have become obfuscated by decades of war and hatred. Despite this, it is important that we continue to dream of a better world. As John Lennon says, “You might say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one. I hope one day you’ll join us and the world will live as one.” — Keith Hame

**Thomas Kessler** was born in 1937 in Zürich. After studies in German and Romanic linguistics at the Universities of Zürich and Paris he studied composition with Heinz Friedrich Hartig, Ernst Peppinger and Boris Blacher in Berlin where he founded his own electronic studio in 1965. In the following years he was director of the Berlin Electronic Beat Studio and musical director of the Centre Universitaire International de Formation et de Recherche Dramatiques in Nancy. From 1973 until 2000 he taught composition and theory at the Basel Music Academy and created the well-known electronic studio there. Together with Gerard Zinsstag he founded the festival “Tage fuer Neue Musik” in Zürich and the live-electronic music festival “ECHTZEIT!” with Wolfgang Heiniger in Basel. As a composer of numerous instrumental chamber music, orchestral music and live-electronic music compositions, he is interested in the interactions between musicians and electronics. Thomas Kessler lives in Basel and Toronto.

**Thomas Kessler (Switzerland 1937) Is It Marion? (2002/2015)**

[The original version of] *Is it?* is based on a short text in “Composition as Progress / III. Communication” from the book “Silence” by John Cage. This text by Cage comprises 56 short questions whose order is calculated and amounted through chance operations. I have deliberately left this text unchanged in its sequence and gave each question a period of 11 seconds. The ritual sequence of these simple questions is what the singer attempts to gradually free herself from within the strictures of the music. These questions of Cage have an uncanny power. Cage gives no answers and ritualistically presses forward. His questions ask us what we are actually hearing. Therefore, in my characteristic way, the music is partly supporting the questions and partly seeking an answer.

— Thomas Kessler

**Editor’s Note:** In 2015 Thomas Kessler reworked *Is It?* incorporating a recording of the text read by Marion Aitken (1935-2015) *Is It Marion?* is Kessler’s tribute to a dear friend who passed away last September. Mr. Kessler says “I never actually thought about using the original recording of Marion Aitken in concert, but now that she is no longer with us this recorded voice takes on an entirely other meaning.”

**Anthony Tan** is a Canadian composer-pianist, electronic musician and improviser based between Montréal and Berlin. His music is influenced by past experiences as a club DJ, training as a classical pianist and concert music composer within the Western European musical tradition. As a composer he has been commissioned by the SWR EXPERIMENTAL-STUDIO, Ensemble Recherche, Dresden Philharmonie, Ensemble Contemporaine de Montréal, Les Ris de Paris, Ensemble Cairn, L’Orchestre de la Francophonie Canadienne, Ensemble Moderne Académie, Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, the New Oxford String Quartet, Toca Loca, Turning Point Ensemble, New Music Concerts, and the Rubbing Stone Ensemble. His music has been presented at festivals including Tonlagen (Hellerau), Imatronic (ZKM), NYC electroacoustic festival, ICMC (Montreal, New York), Matrix (SWR Freiburg), Voix-Nouvelles (Royaumont), Domaine Forget, and Acanthes. Awards include a finalist for the International Edward Grieg Competition, the audience and jury prize from the ECM+ Generation 2014 tour, a 2012 Stipendium from the SWR Experimental Studio, 2011 Giga-Hertz Förder Prize, International Competition for live-electronics of the Hamburg Klangwerkstage and the Médaille d’or in piano performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music. Anthony completed his artistic training at the Hochschule für Musik Carl Maria von Weber Dresden, Germany with Mark Andre and Franz Martin Olbrisch. Additionally, he holds a Ph.D. from McGill University where he worked with John Rea (composition) and Stephen McAdams (Psychoacoustics). His dissertation research focused on the perception of timbre and its functional use in music. In 2016-2017 he will be a fellow of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, Harvard University.

**Anthony Tan (Canada1978) On the Sensations of Tone II (2016)**

This is the second work in a series that draws its title from Hermann Helmholtz’s classical acoustics text: *On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music* (1863). This book combines physics, physiology and psychological aspects of listening in order to explain the origins of musical notions of harmony and dissonance. In this series I am exploring a more physiological experience of sound, moving beyond historically conditioned notions of consonance and dissonance, and towards the ear becoming an active participant in the listening process rather than a submissive sense organ. Moments of ‘music’ become interspersed with sonic ‘situations’, whereby tension arises through the simultaneous juxtaposition of timbral qualities, suggesting a timbral counterpoint. Furthermore, I explore the evolutionary expectation of source sounds, the natural physiological responses of the ear (beatings, and virtual fundamentals) to certain acoustic stimuli, and the use of repetition and contextual placement of sounds to distort musical memory.

— Anthony Tan
So Jeong Ahn was born in Seoul, Korea and studied composition at Seoul National University and at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin, Germany. She has also been engaged with live electronic music, participating as a guest composer in the courses for electronic music by Thomas Kessler and for algorithmic composition by Hanspeter Kyburz at the Basel Electronic Studio in Switzerland. Her awards include the Tsang Houei Hsu Composition Award in Taiwan, the Salvatore Martirano Award in Illinois, USA and the Weimarer Frühjahrstage für zeitgenössische Musik in Germany. Her works have been premiered by New Music Concerts, the ‘Eclat’ Festival in Stuttgart, Salzburg Biennale, ISCM World Music Days, the Glenn Gould School Ensemble, Ensemble Sori and Ensemble TIMF Korea. She has been living in Berlin since 2015.

**So Jeong Ahn** (South Korea 1956) *LOL* (2012/2015)

The acronym ‘LOL’ is shorthand for “laughing out loud” in the online world. Notwithstanding the silence of the letters themselves, our mind sees the image of an exhilaratingly laughing face and hears a burst of spontaneous laughter as we read it. It’s the moment where the virtual online world becomes the real world, effecting an immediate transition from the visual to the aural realm.

The process of finding the equivalent of laughter from the piano represents a similar transition or interaction between the ‘musical’ and ‘non-musical’ aspects of the instrument. The pianist is assigned the difficult task of expressing the peculiar edged tension of bursting into loud laughter. For the tape part I used time-stretched transformations of instrumental tones, a short phrase of my singing voice, and anonymous samples of laughter from the internet. — So Jeong Ahn

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**Paul Steenhuisen** (born Vancouver, Canada) is an independent composer working with acoustic and digital media. His concert music consists of orchestral, chamber, solo, and vocal music, and often includes live electronics and soundfiles. Raised by parents from The Netherlands and Curaçao, the confluence of his heritage and upbringing in North American culture has informed both his education and musical output. Initially, Steenhuisen worked with Keith Hamel (DMA, UBC), simultaneously with Louis Andriessen at the Koninklijk Conservatorium in the Hague and Michael Finnissy in Hove, England, then later with Tristan Mural at IRCAM in Paris. During those years, he was laureate of more than a dozen national and international awards, including the Governor General of Canada Gold Medal as the outstanding student in all faculties (UBC), seven awards in the PROCAN/SOCAN Competition, and four in the CBC Young Composers Competition. He was a finalist in the Gaudeamus Music Week, and his piece WONDER was a “recommended” work at the International Rostrum of Composers (UNESCO, Paris). Subsequently, Steenhuisen was composer in residence with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and Assistant Professor of Composition at the University of Alberta. In 2011, he was awarded the Victor Martin Lynch-Staunton Award (Canada Council for the Arts) as the outstanding mid-career artist in music. He is also the author of ‘Sonic Mosaics: Conversations with Composers’, and host of the SOUNDLAB New Music Podcast (iTunes). His music has been called “Superb... the high point of the concert” (Neuzeit Graz, Austria), as well as “filth” (La Presse, Montréal), with a “freshness that bodes well for the future” (Paris Transatlantic).

**Paul Steenhuisen** (Canada 1965) *Vajrayana Tantra Shift* (2016)

Vajrayana (Sanskrit: “Thunderbolt Vehicle, or “Diamond Way”, translated as “adamantine”, or “indestructible”) Buddhism is a highly complex school deriving from the Mahayana tradition. It is considered the most mystical and esoteric form, and the accelerated, riskier route to enlightenment in one lifetime, using mantraic formulas, incantation, ritual, and magic to obtain the power to accomplish mundane and supramundane goals.

The tantra (“treatise” or “exposition” from the root tan “extend, stretch, expand” and suffix tra “instrument”) sound materials are woven together to express the belief in the fundamental unity of phenomena. Simultaneously, as the dualism of the musical identities diminishes, the music shifts further inside the morphology of the sounds themselves.

Vajrayana Tantra Shift is a fantasy on memories of the profound and wide-ranging experience of listening to a ceremony I attended (in Gangtok, Sikkim, India), heard and mirrored through the comparative filter of my contemporary ear, and the outcomes of both agreeing to be a subject/subjected to (assujettissement), and giving in, or transcending, from that initial state. The work was commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts. Travel support was provided by an Alberta Foundation for the Arts Cultural Relations Grant.

— Paul Steenhuisen
45th season | 378th event
Sunday April 24, 2016
St Luke’s United Church, 353 Sherbourne St., Toronto
New Music Concerts presents:

**flutes galore!**

NMC Ensemble | Robert Aitken director

**Programme:**

Robert Aitken (Canada1939) **Tsunami** and **Solesmes** (2009)
for 24 flutes | Robert Aitken conductor

for 24 flutes | Robert W. Stevenson, conductor, World Premiere

Alex Pauk (Canada1945) **IMPULSE** (2016)
for 24 flutes | Alex Pauk, conductor
World Premiere, commissioned by NMC with the assistance of the Ontario Arts Council

— Intermission —

Bruce Mather (Canada 1939) **Hors Piste - OFF TRACK** (2010)
for 24 flutes | Robert Aitken conductor

C christopher Butterfield (Canada 1952) **Bosquet** (2010)
for 22 flutes and cello | David Hetherington, solo cello | Robert Aitken conductor

Flute orchestra: Dianne Aitken; Les Allt; Shelley Brown; Laura Chambers; Samantha Chang; Tristan Durie; Patricia Dydnansky; Amy Hamilton; Susan Hoeppner; Jan Junker; Christopher Lee; Sibylle Marquardt; Doug Miller; Sarah Moon; Leslie Newman; Nancy Nourse; Kevin O’Donnell; Maria Pelletier; Alheli Pimienta; Stephen Tam; Paul Taub; Anne Thompson; Jamie Thompson; Katherine Watson; Camille Watts.

World renowned Canadian flutist, composer and conductor Robert Aitken has been honoured with the Order of Canada and is a Chevalier de l’ordre des Arts et des Lettres (France). He began formal composition studies with Barbara Pentland while principal flutist of the Vancouver Symphony (1958-59) and then at the University of Toronto with John Weinzbieg for both his Bachelor (1959-61) and Master’s degrees (1961-64). As the first composition student admitted to the Electronic Music Studio of the U of T, he composed a number of prominent electronic works. The first work which established him as a composer in the eyes of the concert public was his Concerto for 12 Soloists and Orchestra. This was performed by the Toronto Symphony, conducted by Seiji Ozawa, in 1968. Since that time he has completed a number of commissions for such prominent organizations as the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the CBC, the National Youth Orchestra, the York Winds, IRCAM, the Elmer Iseler Singers, the National Flute Association and the Orchestre de Flûtes Français (OFF). Each of Aitken’s works deals with particular questions of colour, space and instrumental technique and the music is an attempt to create a memorable, colourful, sonic solution to these problems. The earliest pieces deal with various 12 tone transformations and the spatial moving of sound. But following Aitken’s five-month journey to the Orient, he undertook four works reflecting his musical experiences there. After these four Shadows he returned again to the extra musical challenge of instrumental extension and amplification with his Spiral for orchestra. Since that time, his music reflects the minimal and harmonic influences of today, mixed with a rhythmic drive from his student years with John Weinzbieg and the elaborate melodic structure of numerous Oriental musics. All of his works are published by Universal Edition, Salabert, Ricordi and Peer Music.

Robert Aitken (Canada1939) Tsunami and Solesmes (2009)

**Tsunami:** It is difficult to imagine how anyone who has seen images of the destructive power and horrific magnificence of the 2004 tsunami that poured over Southeast Asia could ever forget it. That is why I chose this “memory” to be the first in a cycle of pieces for flute orchestra. Typical idiomatic flute writing with scales, trills and varieties of wind sounds has always proven ideal for representations of water. And piccolos, C flutes, alto flutes and bass flutes, in this case 24 of them, give the composer a wide range of possibilities over five octaves. Add to this the feeling of stereophonic space provided by dividing the orchestra and Tsunami becomes my impression of that calamitous event. The solo cadenzas at the end form a bridge to the bass flute solo which opens the following movement, my memory of Solesmes.
**Solesmes:** One of my subjects in university was paleography, the study of early notation and medieval music. During the course of study, a name which continually turned up was Solesmes, the Benedictine monastery in the wilds of the Loire Valley which had been assigned the task of finding the authentic Gregorian chant that had become lost and convoluted over the years. When at the age of 24, I had an opportunity to visit Europe, one of the first things I chose to do was find that monastery. I will never forget it! The music was so beautiful. The clouds of incense, the entire Latin service sung, and the ethereal sound of the voices resulted in an overwhelming sensory experience which has stayed in my mind until today. No instrumental combination could be better suited to convey this impression than unison flutes. The subtleties in colour between registers and of course the instruments themselves, bass, alto, C flute and piccolo can transport the listener to a magical elevated world of pure sonic beauty. The movement I composed is very much in the style of Solesmes but without conscious quotations from the services. Working with the colour combinations of the four instruments, all playing in unison and octaves brought me infinite pleasure and transported me back to that fall day in 1964 in the abbé of Solesmes. — Robert Aitken

**Robert W. Stevenson** has been an active force in the music community as a player, conductor, composer and educator since the early 70s. Mr. Stevenson's background is wide ranging and diverse, encompassing many forms including jazz, classical, new music, klezmer and free improvisation. He has performed regularly with a wide variety of ensembles including Arraymusic, New Music Concerts, Tapestry New Opera Works and the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band among many others. He leads four groups, The Bob Standard, Big Idea, The Bob Stevenson Quartet and Safety In Numbers and is also a member of Red Rhythm and has appeared on the recordings of many artists including Holly Cole, Lily Frost, Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band, Arraymusic, New Music Concerts, Red Rhythm and Anthony Genge as well as many film and television soundtracks. As a composer Robert has been commissioned by choreographers Bill James, Maxine Heppner and Holly Small; performers Arraymusic, The Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan, Innovations En Concert, Stephen Clarke, Toca Loca, the Modern Quartet and the Madawaska Quartet. His compositions have been recorded by such artists as Arraymusic, The Evergreen Club, Elliott Sharp and Toca Loca. He served as artistic director for the evergreen club contemporary composer series from 2005 - 2010 and was artistic director of the improvising new music big band hemispheres from 1995-1998 as well as serving as its conductor from 1992. He served as guest lecturer in clarinet and composition at York University in Toronto and at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.


This work was composed in celebration of Robert Aitken's 76th birthday and is dedicated to him. The origin of this composition came from a telephone conversation with Daniel Foley in April of 2015. He told me of NMC's plan to present a concert of music for flute orchestra and shared with me Robert Aitken's score for Tsunami. My initial reaction was skeptical, as I had serious reservations about these large groupings of like instruments. I had played in clarinet choirs as a teenager, experiences which where neither musical nor fun. I promised to look at the score however and give my opinion. Upon examining Aitken's inspiring piece, I thought that there were possibilities for me and began to think seriously about a new work. My first thought was, well, what do flute orchestras play? They play arrangements of existing repertoire, everything from Schubert's Unfinished Symphony to Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition. I decided to select two of my own compositions for arrangement. However, the intention was not to create a faithful rendering for flute orchestra of pre existing compositions, but rather to start anew, as though the selected works were sketches to be developed. The intention was to explore Mahler's belief that one does not compose the material so much as that one is composed by the material itself. It became immediately apparent that the very fact of creating a work for a large group of like instruments would completely transform the existing pieces. I had no desire to create a faithful orchestration of the music at hand. I allowed the sound of the flute orchestra and the history of flute performance itself to shape the composition. Thus, many things were transformed. The ensemble itself has metamorphosed all figuration, tessitura, pitch and even the length and rhythmic structure. I hope that these Two Fancies will please the dedicatee and that, in some small way, add to an appreciation of the musical possibilities of an ensemble that Robert Aitken values so much. — Robert W. Stevenson

**Alex Pauk** was inducted into the Order of Canada in September of 2015. He has a wide range of experience as a composer with works for every kind of performing ensemble, film, TV, theatre, and dance and his music has been performed throughout Canada, the U.S., Europe and China. His most notable compositions include works for large orchestra (Echo Spirit Isle, Cosmos, Portals of Intent), music for choir and orchestra (Devotions), multimedia works (Touch Piece), a concerto for harp and orchestra, a flute quintet, and Musiques immergées for chamber orchestra and audio playback. Along with his work as a composer of concert music he has also had a burgeoning career as a composer of film music with over thirty scores to his credit. As a conductor and educator, Pauk revitalized orchestral life for composers across Canada in 1983 by founding the Esprit Orchestra as Canada's only orchestra devoted to new music. With his orchestra's core of 60 top instrumentalists, Canada's best soloists, and an annual subscription series in Toronto, he encourages composers to take bold new directions. His innovative programming and commitment to the community through Esprit have garnered SOCAN and Chalmers Awards as well as three Lieutenant Governor’s Arts Awards. He was named Musician of the Year (1999) by peers at the Toronto Musicians’ Association, was a recipient of the Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize (2007) and has helped many composers advance their careers through commissions, high profile performances, recordings and broadcasts.
The playful, breezy flute sounds of this piece have been in my head for a long time but the initial spark or impulse for writing the piece came when I imagined how it would end. The music’s flow is a continuity of impulses with my conception of the end having stimulated all that comes before it. From the start, Impulse has the quality of being a piece gradually coming together, with soloists or groups of players interweaving and interacting with each other, sometimes quite independently, sometimes as part of a larger conversation. In varying combinations, the voices offer commentaries, make individualistic outbursts (trying to “get a word in edgewise”) interrupt one another with recurring flashes of thematic material or imitate and riff off of each other in solos, duos, or choruses. Finally the piece resolves with all the sounds percolating along in much the same beat. A tight rhythmic sense with a strong feel for syncopation is important for all players. The piece is written entirely in 4/4 time with all rhythmic complexities written into the score as overlays to the four beats per bar. Themes from the early part of the piece keep recurring and recombining in unexpected ways – sometimes shooting off in different directions like branches of a tree, at other times colliding, and finally coalescing in a harmonious ending. Impulse is dedicated to Robert Altken and was commissioned by New Music Concerts with the assistance of the Ontario Arts Council. — Alex Pauk

Bruce Mather was born in Toronto, but has made Montréal his home since 1966 and is considered one of Québec’s most important composers. He studied piano with Alberto Guerrero and composition with Oskar Morzewitz, Godfrey Ridout and John Weinzwieg at the Royal Conservatory in Toronto and at the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto, completing his Bachelor’s degree in 1959. Post-graduate studies took him to France where he worked with Darius Milhaud (composition) and Olivier Messiaen (analysis). Mather completed a master’s degree at Stanford University with Leland Smith and received his doctorate from the University of Toronto in 1967. Mather’s music has been performed regularly throughout Canada and is frequently heard in the United States and Europe. He has been commissioned by numerous major orchestras and contemporary music organizations at home and abroad, including the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Radio France, the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, Toronto New Music Concerts, the Esprit Orchestra, the Rouen Chamber Orchestra, Trio Basso (Cologne) and the Collectif musical international de Champigny (2e2m). Mather was appointed to the Faculty of Music at McGill University in 1966, and remained there for over thirty years, teaching analysis, advanced harmony, and composition. He also directed the institution’s contemporary music ensemble.

My work Hors Piste - OFF TRACK was composed in 2010 for the Orchestre de Flûtes Français (OFF). In a way, quarter tones are “off track” or, in French, “hors piste.” It calls for 2 piccolos, 10 normal flutes, 4 alto flutes, 4 bass flutes and 4 contrabass flutes. Half of the 24 flutes are tuned a quarter tone lower than normal pitch. The first performance, under the direction of Paul Méfano took place in Paris on March 14, 2011. — Bruce Mather

Christopher Butterfield was born in Vancouver in 1952. As a boy he sang in King’s College Choir, Cambridge. Deciding to be a composer, he studied with Czech-Canadian composer Rudolf Komorous in Victoria, BC, and Turkish-American composer Bülent Arel in Stony Brook, NY. From 1977 to 1992 he lived in Toronto and Montreal, where he played in the rock band KLo, and gave performances of sound poetry and performance art. In 1992 he returned to the west coast to teach composition at the University of Victoria. In 2014, Victoria’s Aventa Ensemble and Toronto percussionist Rick Sacks toured 5 cities in the USA with parc, for vibraphone and ensemble. Butterfield’s translations of three plays by Paris Dadaist Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes: The Emperor of China, The Mute Canary and The Executioner of Peru, were published by Wakefield Press of Cambridge, MA, in January 2015.

Bosquet was commissioned in 2010 by Véronique Lacroix, director of ECM+, and Montreal’s Ensemble Alizé. The commission was for a very particular ensemble: 22 flutes and one violoncello. At first I had no idea what to do, but quickly realized that the group’s homogeneous nature would make it ideal for spatial music, in that the listener would be surrounded by a single timbral world, without the distraction of other voices. Structurally, the piece is built from a combination of all 43 possible four-note chords, and all 60 possible five-note chords. A direct ratio of 43:60 determines how the harmony changes over the duration of the piece. The ‘c’ello part is entirely derived from the ever-changing combination of chords. While Bosquet appears to be a “concerto”, the ‘c’ello part is intended to be elusive rather than central, colouring and articulating the texture rather than being accompanied by it. It is part of a series of pieces written in the past six years which includes Pastorale, Frame, fall, parc, Maritime, and Canter.

— Christopher Butterfield